UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY

THE LIBRARY
OF
THE UNIVERSITY
OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES

Miss Jane Attwood

with the Author's

kind regards

August 1852

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2008 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

http://www.archive.org/details/centenarycommemo00mart

THE

CENTENARY:

A

COMMEMORATIVE

POEM:

INCLUDING

OCCASIONAL SKETCHES OF MEN AND EVENTS

IN THE

HISTORY OF METHODISM.

IN FOUR BOOKS.

BY THOMAS MARTIN.

"Now therefore write ye this song for you, and teach it the children of Israel: put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for me," &c.—Deut. xxxi. 19.

LONDON:
SOLD BY JOHN MASON, 14, CITY-ROAD;
AND 66, PATERNOSTER-ROW;
AND MAY BE HAD OF THE BOOKSELLERS.

1839.

ROCHE, PRINTER, 70, OLD-STREET ROAD, LONDON.

BX
8232
W56c

PREFACE.

Wesleyan Methodism has now existed for an entire century; and, during that time, has been viewed in every aspect, and subjected to every test, of which it is capable. Its true character, therefore, cannot but be fully known; and what it has been, it is likely to continue,—an interesting form of "Christianity in earnest," and a useful agent in the establishment and extension of pure religion, both at home and abroad. The virtues of its revered Founder, and its institutions of public usefulness, its influence on the revival and spread of pure religion in this country, its principles of loyalty and love of order, and its bearing on the moral and religious interests of man,—all have undergone the scrutiny of ages, and will therefore go down to posterity with a settled and an unequivocal character, such as may essentially influence the destinies of future generations.

The past history and present state of Wesleyan Methodism, will afford the best evidence of the following facts. 1. That there did exist in the moral and religious state of this country, at the time Methodism began, a great necessity for the zeal and labours of faithful men, to revive religion, and reform the manners of the people. 2. That Methodism,

93769

under God, has instrumentally wrought a great and good work in this nation, which is observable in the moral and religious improvement especially of the lower ranks of society, and in the additional means now employed for the spread of religion at home and abroad. 3. That Methodism still retains, not only unimpaired, but greatly enlarged means of usefulness, in the sphere in which she is called to move for the good of mankind. 4. That there still exists an obvious necessity for the continuance and enlargement of the same means and plans, to promote the glory of God in the salvation of the world, till the great objects of the Gospel shall have been accomplished in the subjugation of the kingdoms of this world to our God and his Christ.

The Centenary of this great work, however it may be viewed by others, cannot but be of great interest to the whole family of Methodism. They may, therefore, be allowed with gratitude and humility to celebrate this event, and to offer thanksgivings to the Author of all good. And in this case many have offered of their abundance to the Lord; and others, not less acceptably, have done what they could to erect some memorial, on which may be inscribed, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy name be *all* the praise."

The Reformation in Germany, of which LUTHER and MELANCTHON were the chief instruments, took place in 1417, and the centenary of that event has been celebrated, both in this country and on the Continent, with great gladness and zeal. The trans-

lation of the entire Bible into the English tongue, of which COVERDALE and TINDAL were the principal agents, has been more recently noticed in this nation with gratitude to God for so great a benefit. The rise of Methodism in England, of which WESLEY and WHITEFIELD were the first instruments, is an event which, after the expiration of a hundred years, is thought proper to be observed with thankfulness to God for the good of which it has been instrumental.

Had it been necessary to name authorities for the commemoration of interesting events, the civil and religious history of the world would afford all the authorities that the most scrupulous could desire to justify the practice. The commemorative principle is evidently involved in the festivals of the primitive church. The day of the nativity and crucifixion, the resurrection and ascension of Christ, together with the day of Pentecost, have been observed in the Christian church from the beginning; and however these festivals may have been abused, they were originally, both in principle and practice, agreeable to the spirit of piety, and the signified will of God in reference to primitive usages. Nor can there lie any valid objection to this principle, if applied to any section of the Christian church. The example of Samuel, the seer of Israel, is not objectionable on Christian principles. "Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Eben-ezer, saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." (1 Sam. vii. 12.) This passage

refers to the goodness of God shown to his people up to the date of the record. To the same goodness and help are we indebted for our preservation and prosperity, and placed under the same obligations to God. At the completion of an entire century of our history, we too may lawfully record, on some lasting memorial, our Eben-ezer, for "hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

Something also is due to posterity, and it is a part of the duty of the present generation to provide for after-times, and to transmit to the generations following the truth and institutions by which so many have been benefited, and which retain their unimpaired efficiency to extend the light and blessings of pure religion through all future times, and to all the nations of the earth.

There is, however, nothing in this cause more remarkable than its providential character. The plan and economy of this work were not the result of previous design, but the creations of Providence, suggested by necessities as they arose, and ripening into order and settlement under the same direction. The Centenary movement of munificence is also in keeping with the same view. No Prophet had foretold the full extent of Wesleyan benevolence, and the brightest dreams of the most visionary have been less brilliant than the reality itself.

The Wesleys were men of taste, as well as of piety and learning. The elder of the two, when young, courted the muses with great success, and has left some beautiful specimens of his poetical abilities.

But the younger, Charles, was more particularly favoured in this respect, or, at least, more particularly cultivated this kind of study. His fine taste was sanctified by piety, and his poetical talents devoted to the service of religion. All his hymns have great merit; and some of them are matchless compositions of the class to which they belong. By him poetry has been associated with Methodism from the beginning; and it will be his enviable lot to guide the devotions of thousands in future ages. His are truly "hymns of the heart," suited to the various spiritual states of the children of God, while they embody the theology of the Bible, and blend principles of faith with the devotions of the heart.

The following little poem, which has but very humble pretensions, was composed at a time when the Centenary subject engaged much public attention, and is placed among the offerings by which that period was marked, in acknowledgment of many blessings received in connexion with this cause. And in a case in which so many have presented their gifts to God, the author is content to risk his poetical reputation in adopting this method of expressing his sympathy in the general joy. And, probably, in the absence of other means equal to his wishes, this little tribute may not be unacceptable, at least, to the juvenile portion of the Wesleyan family.

Further than this, the author has very little to say for himself, and still less for his work; unless it may be added, that having began to write a few sketches in verse, he was led on farther than he intended to go,

chiefly by the gratifying recollections of other days, which the subject had awakened in his mind.

Whatever is matter of taste is of uncertain celebrity, because taste itself is of a variable character. And yet poetry more than any other kind of composition is subject to the decisions of this fluctuating power. He, therefore, who writes verse, is liable to pay a large tax of censure if he fail, and to have but parsimonious praise if he succeed; and in either case he will need more philosophy than poetry implies, to reconcile himself to the uncertain result.

It may, however, abate undue solicitude to fall back on the not unreasonable hope, that what was well intended will be well received; and that the artless effusions of an occasional muse may owe to candour the means of affording general satisfaction.

The Grove, Hackney,
Dec. 1839.

BOOK THE FIRST.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE general subject proposed—the invocation—preparatory allusion to Mr. Wesley's labours—the lasting nature of divine love—the cause of truth not to be arrested in its progress—the ground of this confidence laid in the truth of God—the genius of Methodism—its commendations—great events arise from trivial causes—this sentiment applied to the proposed subject—the early movements and objects of Mr. Wesley—reference to the beginning of Methodism—the character and views of the first Methodists—the views of observers respecting them—the suggestions of slander—further illustrations of their temper, patience, simplicity, conversation, social habits, and separation from the world—some early cases of defection—all judged by the faults of a few—a milder judgment afterward given—Mr. Wesley and the church—the beginning of his course—his voyage to Georgia and his return—his journey to Germany, and its results—the character, usefulness, and death of Whitefield—Mr. Wesley pursues his public labours—visits different parts of the three kingdoms—sketch of his visits and successes in Cornwall—satisfaction in referring to them—the circumstances of a revival—Mr. Wesley's zeal and perseverance—his course assailed by controversy—the views of adversaries—Fletcher's piety, talents, and defence of Mr. Wesley—the character of Charles Wesley—his zeal, poetic talents, usefulness, and happy death—Mr. Wesley renews his toils—his success—his lengthened life—advancing age—circumstances of his happy death—its effect upon public opinion—his body lying in state—the grief of his surviving friends—his death a crisis—the wisdom and fidelity of his Preachers—they resolve to remain united—they ask heavenly help—and proceed to their stations—their character and ministry—an apostrophe to religion—her nature described—the prophetic bards—their predictions of Christ's kingdom, and its future prosperity—the world urged to wait for brighter days which shall yet bless mankind.

THE CENTENARY.

I.

Grace, and the man by grace sustain'd,
Through lengthen'd labours, till he gain'd
The honours of a rich reward,
In souls thus gather'd to the Lord,
Sing, gentle muse; nor blush to own
Deeds that so well deserve renown,
And rise above the hero's claim,
To nobler heights of spotless fame.
What though the peaceful theme affords
Nor gleaming spears, nor glitt'ring swords,
Nor fields of blood, nor feats of arms,
Nor trophies won in war's alarms;
Yet all the virtues that combine
To make the most illustrious shine,
And all the deeds that merit praise,
And all the qualities that raise
Our views of honour'd mortals high,
Here meet the thought, and charm the eye.

II.

Come all ye powers, to whom belong
The comely ornaments of song;
Come, bright remembrance, vivid thought,
And steadfast truth, that changeth not;
And chasten'd zeal, and love sincere,
And courage calm, and judgment clear;
And taste and genius, just and true,
And candour, kind in every view,
And fancy, sober in her flights,
And sage discretion, that delights,

With cautious and corrected care,
To speak of all things as they are.
But chiefly come, thou Light divine,
And high o'er all serenely shine;
'Tis thine to give the feeble force,
And cheer the falt'ring in their course;
To lead the wayward, and inspire
The timid with heroic fire;
O come, and over all preside,
And be my all-sufficient guide.

III.

The man approved, and own'd by heaven,
To whom the sacred charge was given,
By toils and counsels, great and wise,
To bid a slumb'ring realm arise
From dreams delusive, and no more
Sleep, as too long it slept before:
For him, the servant of the Lord,
Let lowly honours be prepared.
Prepare a wreath, ye favour'd bands,
Who saw him pass to distant lands;
And ye, who when his toils began,
Beheld the heaven-directed man,
Go forth, in moral vigour strong,
To teach the uninstructed throng,
And with a never-weary hand
To scatter blessings through the land,
And gather from the wilds afar
The wandering to their Shepherd's care:
For him, who spent his lengthened life
In public toils and pious strife,
A wreath of spotless fame prepare,
That as his worth may flourish fair,
And nobly crown his bright career.

IV.

Fixt in his steadfast purpose, he
Led onward with alacrity,

Though ease might tempt a brief delay,
And friendship court a longer stay.
Though round the rugged mountains roll'd
The chilling blasts of wintry cold;
Though fierce the storm, or rough the sea,
Yet timely at his post to be,
He braves the tempest, void of care,
Save to be at the moment there.
And there arrived, he toils awhile,
Then quits the scene with kindly smile,
And seeks another; nor reposes
Till light recedes, and evening closes;
Then early, ere the lingering sun
Had yet his radiant course begun,
He rose, his destined race to run.

V.

They sin who say that love will fail
Whene'er adversities assail;
And that the summer's friend will fly,
When winter's chilling blasts are high.
'Tis true, whate'er is born of earth
Will perish in its place of birth;
And the mere feelings of a day
May, as some transient flower, decay.
But love is lasting as the prop
That bears the earth and all things up,
And steadfast as the changeless pole,
While all the stars around it roll.
From heaven's eternal fount it came,
A pure, imperishable flame,
Which kindled, shall serenely burn
Till it shall back to heaven return.
Though subjected to tests severe,
'Tis tried as in a furnace here;
Yet nothing but its vile alloy
Shall these refining tests destroy.
The force of love, sincere and true,
Not many waters can subdue;

Nor life, with all its ills annoy,
Nor death with all its dread destroy.
They therefore greatly err, who say,
That heavenly love soon dies away;
Allied to deathless things on high,
And lasting as its native sky,
True love and friendship cannot die.

VI.

This work of love has lasting claim
To honours of exalted name,
And shall it fail? shall fraud or force
Arrest its ever rapid course?
Shall human power, or hellish pride,
Prevail to stop the swelling tide
That rolls abroad, in gentle roar,
From realm to realm, and shore to shore?
Let him who would its course impede,
To minor prodigies proceed;
Let him with lifted hand control
The winds that rush from pole to pole;
And seize the lightnings as they fly,
And hurl them back upon the sky.
Let him forbid the king of day
To walk along his shining way;
Or bid the rolling orbs above
No longer round their circuits rove.
Let him with potent power repel
The waves of ocean as they swell,
And bid the pealing thunders cease,
And hush the elements to peace.
These done, behold, the daring foe
Has yet a harder work to do;
To throw a fetter round the soul,
And love's eternal fires control;
To chain the spirit that must be,
As heaven designed it, ever free.
When man can match eternal might,
And quench the sun, the source of light,

Reverse Jehovah's high decree,
And change all human destiny;
Then, nor till then, shall fraud or force
Arrest its ever rapid course.
This work of love shall spread and grow,
In spite of each opposing foe,
And flourish through all realms below.

VII.

This fearless confidence express'd,
Requires some rock on which to rest
Its ponderous hopes; too great and high
To rest on aught beneath the sky.
The rock that is in Zion laid,
The *truth of God*—on that is stay'd
The hope of man; and that shall stay
Till heaven and earth have fled away.
That Book, beyond all books divine,
There blessings crowd in every line;
And promises of grace abound,
That shed celestial joys around.
O, it were wisdom well to look
And search the depths of such a book!
O, it were piety and pleasure,
To love and prize so rich a treasure;
Its grace to know, its hopes to feel,
And practise all its precepts well!
O, it were heaven on earth to share
The beaming blessings, rich and fair,
That shine with saving lustre there!

VIII.

And dost thou, with devout desire,
Of this mysterious work inquire;
As wishful to decide its claim
To kind support, and pious fame?
Then own it, in its walks abroad,
A great and glorious work of God;
That bears upon its front afar
This fair and obvious character:—

Its native and distinctive charm
Is found in zeal divinely warm;
And frankness open as the day,
And undisguised simplicity;
And living faith, and social love,
And wishes set on things above:
And deeds of usefulness, and care
To soothe the sad, and fervent prayer:
And bold rebukes, and gentle sighs,
And tears for human miseries;
And generous purposes to bless
A total world with truth and peace.
Such is its genius, own'd abroad,
And such the character bestow'd
On this acknowledged work of God.

IX.

From trivial causes often springs
A course of great and mighty things;
And countless cases crowd to show
What all who list may learn and know,
That great effect from little cause
Is one of nature's common laws.
The streams that stretch through lands unknown,
A bubbling spring their parent own.
A word, not meant to give offence,
May kindle deadly passion, whence
Or private rage, or public war,
May waste the blood-stain'd earth afar.
From vagrant banditti that stood
And pitch'd their tents on Tiber's flood,
At length a noble city rose,
To rule vast realms, and conquer foes;
And hence, to boundless wonder, come
The glories of imperial Rome.

X.

Nor is it less the will of heaven
That good should thus to man be given.

The little cloud, that as a hand
Rose feebly o'er a thirsty land,
Expanding round the realms on high.
With gloom enwrapp'd the total sky,
And fell, surcharged with fruitful rains,
Wide o'er Judea's parched plains.
The church, when first held forth to view,
Her strength was small, her children few:
Yet growing into greatness fair,
She stands confess'd beyond compare.
Thus too, with only moral force,
Did WESLEY enter on his course
In human frailty; yet led on
By skill superior to his own,
He saw the word divinely spread,
And, as he gazed with wonder, said,
"This is thy doing, potent Lord,
'Twas thine to give the saving word,
And be thy name alone adored!"

XI.

The course of time! 'twere wise to cast
Though but a glance upon the past,
And with devout regard recall
The day of things acknowledged small.
A hundred years have rolled away,
Since dawn'd that memorable day,
When but a little band of love
First met to seek the things above.
Nor was it then their lot to know
To what that little band would grow:
Nor might it by the sage be said,
How wide that little cloud would spread.
It was enough for them to taste
The pleasures of their social feast:
It was enough for them to prove
The peace and joy of pard'ning love:
And with extended arms embrace
Whoe'er would seek redeeming grace.

They felt their sin, and mourn'd their thrall,
Believed the Saviour died for all,
And gather'd hence the glorious hope,
That he could lift all others up.
The grace that found out them, they thought,
Could also find all others out.

XII.

They were a meek and lowly race,
Of simple heart, and gentle grace,
And manners plain, and feelings warm,
And grave without offensive form.
In words and deeds sincere and true,
To all they render'd what was due.
They own'd the right of regal sway,
And dared for conscience' sake obey.
And in their dwellings, and their dress,
Their virtues bade them shun excess.
The young respected hoary age,
And gather'd wisdom from the sage;
The strong their kindly care display'd,
And to the weak afforded aid;
The gay renounced the pride of earth,
And sought the ornaments of worth;
The rich, whatever was their store,
Were not unmindful of the poor;
And from the fashions of the times,
The walks of gaiety and crimes,
They stood apart, and seem'd alone
The claims of piety to own.
Strong in the grace from heaven supplied,
They stood, as if to stem the tide
Of worldly passion, and of pride.

XIII.

The world observed them, doubting not
To find, or else to cast, a spot
On fair professions, doom'd to fade
(As it was thought, or hoped,) in shade.

And then abuse, with noisy tongue,
Declared the whole profession wrong.
With things of good repute at war,
They were precise and singular;
For ever ready to condemn
Whom all, except themselves, esteem.
They were thought righteous over-much,
And fit to be reproach'd as such.
And pure religion, as they preach it,
No sinful man on earth could reach it.
And had they been but better known,
It would perchance be clearly shown,
That what they took a special pride in,
Was their superior skill in hiding.

XIV.

One thing was taken to be clear,
They were not, could not, be sincere:
The thing was quite too much to be
Consistent with sincerity!
This lofty pitch of moral stature
Was far too high for human nature;
And yet they hold, (their books will show it,)
But moral pigmies all below it:
Deceivers, yet themselves deceived,
If yet they erringly believed
That none would mark the slight disguise
That veil'd their sly hypocrisies;
Or e'er detect a sight so loathing,
As wolves enveloped in sheep's clothing.
They had some secret, it was thought,
That must not to the day be brought;
And that the inconvenient light
Had made it wise to meet by night;
And that the doctrines they preferr'd
Had not been written in the word;
And that this new-made wine, thus frothing,
Would soon evaporate in nothing!

XV.

Thus slander spake, yet well they knew
How vile its censures, and untrue.
Nor could the violence of foes
Disturb their quiet and repose.
Calm in the storm, they felt secure,
And dared its wildest wrath endure,
Content to bear the painful load,
And all their cares commit to God:
Assured that, from the strife of tongues,
From evil men, and cruel wrongs,
His hand would on their side appear,
And make their righteous dealings clear.
Not gifted to conduct debate,
Worth must alone decide their fate;
And their best answer in the strife
Was made by an unspotted life.
Their strong appeal from railing men
Was not, indeed, to rail again;
But still to keep their passions even,
And all their cause confide to heaven.
Nor this in vain; the Lord appear'd,
And scatter'd all the ills they fear'd;
And show'd them favour, till their foes
Now deem'd it useless to oppose.
For this they fear'd, and could not fail
To know that truth must still prevail.
And thus the hand of heaven sustain'd
Their interests, which, the more restrain'd,
The more ascendancy they gain'd.

XVI.

The fathers of an age gone by,
Transferr'd to take their seats on high,
The sons of a succeeding train,
With whom their virtues still remain:
The first of a distinguish'd race,
That own'd the power of saving grace;

The first that join'd this lowly band,
That since hath spread throughout the land;
Thus gather'd from the poor and lost,
Into a large, and living host:
What were they in their early days?
And what their faults, and what their praise,
And what their manners? muse, declare!
That latter times may claim to share
A corresponding character.

XVII.

The friends of all, and foes of none,
They were to all around them known,
As well content, if that might be,
To live with all in amity.
To trouble and reproach resign'd,
They loved or pitied all mankind.
Their early hour was spent in prayer,
Sweet peace beguiled their daily care:
They greatly loved the house of God,
And often sought that fair abode;
They soothed distress where'er they saw it,
And sought it out, that they might know it;
With little they were well content,
And prudently that little spent;
Frugal and neat, to self severe,
With conscience ever calm and clear;
They toil'd, and strove from toil to save,
And what they got they freely gave;
And giving much increased their store;
The more they gave, they gain'd the more.
No schemes of greatness bent them down,
The pride of mammon's power to own;
But to their better hopes 'twas given,
To lay their treasure up in heaven.

XVIII.

Well season'd with the salt of grace,
Their words were happily in place;

Their passions own'd a just control,
Nor sought to riot in the soul;
Their tempers were of gentle mould,
Nor meanly meek, nor fiercely bold;
Their worship was serenely warm,
At once composed of fire and form;
Their practice was a pure regard
To all the precepts of the word;
Whose just injunctions, clear as day,
They strove sincerely to obey.
Their simple trust was placed upon
The truth of God, and that alone;
What that reveal'd they dared believe,
And in its obvious sense receive;
Not only to decide opinion,
But o'er their lives to hold dominion.

XIX.

Such were the people, raised to show,
What heaven can work in men below;
And such the race that stood confest,
With gifts of grace so richly blest,
That those who saw them could but own
The virtues in their tempers shown;
And in their lives of peace and love,
The worth that wisdom must approve.
Yet all were not of equal worth,
Nor shone with equal lustre forth:
There were whose light was dimm'd with shade,
Whose sudden brightness soon decay'd;
And in whose doubtful state was found
Some symptoms of a faith unsound.
And some there were who fell away,
And sunk again in "miry clay;"
Their former faith they now condemn.
And changed it, for it changed not them.
And others, having loved the world,
Were by their evil passions hurl'd

From high professions, boldly made,
Back to the follies that degrade;
And, like the swine, with low desire,
Return'd to wallow in the mire.

XX.

Nor was the world without excuse,
At least in part, for its abuse.
Though it were right the bad to blame,
'Twere wrong to treat the good the same.
For the offences of a few,
Why blame the unoffending too?
And from a part, acknowledged small,
To judge, reject, and censure all!
Who all philosophers would blame,
Because a fool assumes the name?
Because a spot is on the sun,
Who thence the king of day would shun?
Twere vain to reason, hate would have it,
And so ungen'rous judgment gave it:
The only balance it would strike
Was this,—that they were all alike!

XXI.

Yet as events arose and past,
A kinder judgment seem'd at last
To do slow justice to the good;
For now their worth was understood:
And shining out in bright display,
Drove all these shades of shame away.
Then prejudice, with strange surprise,
Began to see with other eyes;
And having done a world of wrong,
Thought fit at length to hold its tongue.
And further, as it would atone
For all the evils it had done,
Turn'd round upon its late allies,
And bade them let the past suffice;

And for the future to beware,
And speak the truth, and never dare
To slander whom they never saw,
Nor talk of what they could not know;
Lest truth at length should blast their fame,
And clothe their cruelties with shame.

XXII.

Meantime, behold the honour'd man
Whose bright career had just began.
The love of order, deep and strong,
Had held his struggling wishes long;
Nor but necessity could move
The lingerings of his early love.
He saw the Church of Britain stand
The hope, and glory of the land;
Yet saw her slumbers with alarm,
And sought her feebleness to arm
Against the foe, that thought to keep
Her latent force in lasting sleep.
Within her walls, so long preferr'd,
He first proclaim'd the Gospel word;
The Gospel word, so plainly taught,
Both on himself and doctrine brought
The frown of indolence and pride,
That spurn'd the very means supplied
To work her happy restoration,
And raise her to a nobler station.
To deck her shrine with brighter charms,
His prudent zeal proposed reforms:
Himself and his proposals spurn'd,
He o'er the fatal error mourn'd;
Yet might he not resist the call
That bade him preach the word to all.
The call he dared not disobey,
Lest peril should attend his way:
And God regarding more than man,
Without the aid of previous plan,
His course of public cares began.

XXIII.

When first his spirit caught the flame
Of love to the Redeemer's name,
He cast his kindly thoughts abroad
On the whole family of God;
And saw, and mourn'd to see, the crimes
And wasting woes of foreign climes,
And purposed in his heart to bear
The knowledge of salvation there.
With great desire, and ardent mind,
Friendships and kindred left behind;
He pass'd abroad, as to restore
The wanderers on a distant shore.
The Indians, in their wilds afar,
Had won his warm and noble care;
And much he wish'd, and struggled long,
To walk these desert wastes among.
Nor knew he yet what other care
Had been reserved for him to share;
Nor knew he yet the inward grace
That after in his heart took place.
Nor knew he why obstructions rose,
His favourite project to oppose:
Yet there it was heaven's will to show,
What least of all he thought to know,
His want of justifying faith,—
The grace that saves from guilt and death.
Yet knowing now, he stood prepared
To publish what himself had shared.
Thus train'd by grace, and check'd abroad,
At length he saw the will of God;
And straight obeying, came again,
By mercy wafted o'er the main;
Not knowing why his pious care
Might not find all it sought for there;
Till Providence its will declared,
And he with noble ardour shared
In work without his will prepared.

XXIV.

Though in desire devout and strong,
Yet in experience only young;
From converse with the good and wise,
He sought to gather such supplies
Of sacred lore, as might afford
A deep acquaintance with the word,
In all its mystic force and meaning.
This knowledge from pure sources gleaning,
He pass'd to where the "Brethren" teach
The German peasantry to reach
The heights of virtue, and possess
The depths of Christian holiness.
He saw the humble and the high,
The young and old, with friendly eye;
He saw their order, rule, and law,
And kindly thought of all he saw;
Save, after more minute inspection,
He felt perchance some slight objection;
And when it could be kindly done,
What he objected to was shown,
In very faithfulness and love,
With purpose only to improve;
If that might be, but being not,
He linger'd there to cast his lot;
And after, in befitting season,
He gave his not unfriendly reason
For other views. Yet did he own,
As was most meet, the kindness shown,
And good received. Yet heaven alone
Drew his obedient wishes on,
To labours through the nation known.

XXV.

With ardour not to be subdued,
Now Whitefield sought the multitude:
With fearless courage, flaming zeal,
Such as but noble souls can feel,

He bore the Saviour's name abroad,
Intent to win the world to God.
Impassion'd in a cause so good,
Forth in the open air he stood;
And from the mount, or in the vale,
Made known the spirit-stirring tale
Of dying love, divinely free,
And Him who bled on Calvary
For guilty men: his constant theme,
Was still to preach, and point to Him.
With lifted hands, in bold address,
He spake of Christ our righteousness;
The sinner's friend, the mourner's hope;
Whose grace could lift the fallen up.
Here he grew eloquent and loud;
His mighty voice could reach the crowd,
However large; and thousands heard,
And thousands felt the powerful word,
That came not as in word alone,
But with a force, confess'd its own,
That pierced the heart, compell'd to feel,
And wounded only but to heal.

XXVI.

Far through the land, and o'er the sea,
'Twas his glad tidings to convey;
And these with noble zeal he bore,
And publish'd on a foreign shore,
Where orphan sorrow claim'd his care,
And much too long detain'd him there.
Yet was he great in glorious toils,
And reap'd a rich reward of spoils
From rugged scenes, where still appear
The blessings of his bright career.
And long his honour'd name shall stand
Confess'd among that little band
Of men devout, whose fair renown
The church of after-times shall own.

Remote from where his race began,
This zealous and devoted man
Closed up his course with tranquil joy,
And finishing his blest employ,
As some brave warrior, from alarms,
In peace puts by his batter'd arms,
And rests serene; so he, thus blest,
Reclining on his Saviour's breast,
Sank gently into glorious rest.

XXVII.

As the bright sun, that rising rolls
From the earth's centre to her poles,
And leads afar his radiant rounds,
To the wide world's remotest bounds;
So WESLEY, with expansive mind,
To no locality confined,
Now pass'd in patient labours forth,
To work the weal of all the earth.
As if on wings of love, he fled
With wond'rous and unwearied speed,
Scarce rivall'd by the rapid sun,
As if some angel led him on,
He now ascends the hill sublime,
Which only courage dared to climb.
The peaceful vale he visits then,
The forest wide, or mountain glen,
And offers hope and peace to men.
He fords the flood whose waves run high,
And braves the storm that shakes the sky;
Meets winter in his cold domains,
Where snow-storms whiten all the plains,
Uncheck'd or on the land or sea,
Alike he leads his steadfast way.
Thus he, his passage to explore,
Nor leaves the ship, nor seeks the shore,
Though tempests howl, and thunders roar.

XXVIII.

Led on by heaven, the only guide
In whom the sons of grace confide;
The Grampian heights he now ascends,
And through the lonely valley wends.
The Cambrian hills he fearless treads,
And o'er the winding dale proceeds.
Then, anxious to redress her wrongs,
And teach what to her peace belongs,
He sought Hibernia's teeming strand,
And traversed far the various land.
He saw, and mourn'd her many woes,
And sought her troubles to compose,
And bade her servile sons disdain
The burden of a galling chain;
And seek by better faith to be
From sin and superstition free.
Kingswood! from thy unhopeful soil,
'Twas his to gather plenteous spoil,
And teach the vile and rude to rise,
A race devoted to the skies.
Then, from the cold and frigid north,
'Twas his to draw warm wishes forth;
And in cold hearts to kindle fire
That might to heaven itself aspire,
With all the zeal of strong desire.

XXIX.

Thy erring sons, Cornubia, saw
His early zeal divinely glow;
What time, amid or rock or glen,
His voice was heard, address'd to men,
In language that might well impart
Strong feelings to the hardest heart.
He found thee in the shades of night,
Far from the walks of heavenly light.
The wave that thunders on thy shores,
And round thy rocky bound'ries roars,

Was not more boist'rous than thy storms
Of rage, and riot, and alarms.
Both wide and wild was folly's reign,
Nor aught was present to restrain
The cruel feuds, and barb'rous strife,
That broke the peace of social life,
And led thy heedless tribes astray
From virtue's unfrequented way;
To evil courses long pursued
By the deluded multitude.
The hosts that throng thy coves around;
The trains that toil beneath the ground;
The wreckers, on thy dreaded shore,
Where often fatal tempests roar;
And young and old, of every station,
Were sunk in moral degradation.

XXX.

He came, and saw, and sigh'd to see,
Thy crimes, and wants, and misery;
Nor did his zeal alone deplore
Thy state, but little known before;
But fearless of thy furious hate,
He sought to better thy estate;
And point thy list'ning crowds to Him
Who died the captive to redeem.
And many felt the quick'ning word,
And fear'd, and turn'd them to the Lord;
And rose a race, in heart renew'd,
A meek and loving multitude,
By mercy render'd meet to be
Bright patterns of true piety.
What rock, or hill, or vale, or glen,
What village, or abode of men,
Has not been witness of the zeal
That sought thy moral wounds to heal,
And work thy everlasting weal?

XXXI.

Long time he toil'd, nor saw as yet
The wishes of his heart complete.
A stranger to regret or fear,
In storm and cold, from year to year;
He came, and went, and came again,
Nor might fatigue, reproach, or pain
The ardours of his zeal restrain.
At length the time arrived to bless
His patient labours with success.
Then all was changed! reproach and shame
Were follow'd by respect and fame.
The total multitude, that late
Was full of violence and hate,
Grew tame, and scenes of former riot
Became, beyond example, quiet;
Save where the voice of praise rose high
In joyful anthems to the sky.
Then was fulfill'd the word divine,
The light shall on the darkness shine;
The vales shall rise, the hills descend,
The cedars of the forest bend:
Instead of the unsightly thorn,
Sweet myrtle shall the scene adorn;
And where no gentle river flows,
The desert, where no beauty grows,
Shall bud and blossom as the rose.

XXXII.

Great change! and glad, beyond compare,
The scene of gloom grew strangely fair;
And from that altered scene arose,
Not, as before, a host of foes,
But kindly friends, in union join'd,
In fellowship of heart and mind.
Though various, they were of one soul,
And plenteous grace was on them all.
Born of the Spirit from above,
And fill'd with fires of heavenly love,

They form'd a renovated race
Of true believers, saved by grace.
Theirs was the joy of glorious hope,
That bore their thoughts to glory up.
Their new employ was prayer and praise,
In which they spent their happy days.
Truth was their stay, their rule the word,
Their bliss the presence of the Lord.
They lived in goodness to increase,
And win the world to truth and peace.
Grace was their strength, and toil their doom,
And God their friend, and heaven their home.

XXXIII.

The man of persevering toil,
Thus gather'd more abundant spoil
Than heroes hope, or warriors win;
His were the spoils of conquer'd sin;
And his the fame, beyond compare,
Which only Christian heroes share.
But late he past the bound'ry brook,
With little save his pastoral crook,
Alike unknowing and unknown,
With this he led rejoicing on;
Till now upon that brook he stands,
And sees the labour of his hands
Spread round his walks in many bands.
Thus he who, bearing precious seed,
May weeping on his way proceed,
Shall doubtless, from his blest employ,
Return, and bring his sheaves with joy.

XXXIV.

Great was the change in those perceived,
Who had at length through grace believed;
And they were made a sweet reward
Of labours honour'd by the Lord.
From time to time, and year to year,
Strange scenes attended his career;

And mighty prodigies were wrought,
Such as before he witness'd not.
Beneath the shade of some broad tree,
Or on some rocky height, we see
The man of God, amid the crowd,
With lifted hand, and voice aloud,
Inviting all around to come,
And find in Christ a welcome home.
The word was heard, its power was felt,
And some with tears confess'd their guilt;
And some, relieved, rejoiced to find
Strange peace within a tranquil mind;
And feeling as from bondage free,
Stepp'd into glorious liberty.

XXXV.

It was a strange and stirring scene;
Observers ask'd what it could mean;
And, asking, caught the mystic flame,
And strangely felt, and did the same.
Then some with bitter cries bemoan'd
Their hated sins, and deeply groan'd;
While others leap'd for joy to prove
The sweetness of forgiving love.
And there were songs, and here were sighs,
And throbbing hearts, and gushing eyes;
And bursting praise, and fervent prayer,
And grief and gladness mingling there,
In such excess, that it were vain
The gust of feeling to restrain.
As well might feeble man have tried
To stop the rising of the tide;
As well have sought, by his frail arm,
To still the roaring of the storm,
As to arrest the Spirit's course,
By all the skill of prudent force.
Till now, the hour of late release
Closed on the parting crowd in peace;

And having left their load behind,
Right glad of heart were they to find
Their burden gone: and those who came
Perchance to look about, or blame,
Return'd not back again the same;
But now from sin's delusive path
They pass'd to live a life of faith;
To grace the walks of worth, and be
Fair models of meek piety;
Fill'd with a peace divinely given,
A foretaste of their future heaven.

XXXVI.

Yet were they not from danger free,
Though blest with peace and liberty;
The foe that held them in his chain
Sought ever to enslave again.
But not by violence, as late,
Did he assail their blest estate;
Far other projects now he tried,
And tempted them to ease and pride.
For as industry plenty brings,
So many thrived in worldly things;
In credit and in wealth they grew,
In honour and in affluence too.
And for a season, some there were
That knew not how the change to bear:
Yet others, of superior worth,
Still lived above the things of earth;
Nor could the world's enchanting toys
Seduce them from celestial joys.
Bright from the fiery test they came,
And wore a still unsullied fame.
Yet minds that may unmoved remain,
And all the rage of foes sustain,
Are not unfrequently subdued,
What time the snares of wealth intrude;

What cannot force, has power to charm;
And who in tempests take no harm,
May yet be lost without a storm.

XXXVII.

To his great work devoted still,
He lived to do his Master's will;
Nor ease could tempt him to retreat,
Nor danger his designs defeat.
In urging the Redeemer's cause,
His pious zeal refused to pause:
Early he seized the op'ning day,
And with the sun walk'd on his way;
And where he came it was his care
To leave a lasting blessing there.
Yet were it pitiful to see
The petty forms of enmity,
That as from shades beneath arose,
His course to scandal or oppose.
Some, startled into stern alarm,
For noisy war began to arm.
There was great danger, they declared,
And it were wise to be prepared
To meet it early on the coast,
Before the total land was lost.
Yet was it held in grave debate,
Whether to pity, or to hate.
Some sagely, and at large, contended,
A thing so bad could not be mended;
While others did much pains employ
To learn how Hector guarded Troy:
Hence it was held the better course,
Not to admit the wooden horse;
For once within, there was a doubt
If all their strength could force him out.

XXXVIII.

Yet some advised, as may be shown,
To let the doubtful thing alone;

But this advice was never chosen,
Except by one in twenty dozen.
To have a foe so near the wall,
Was dangerous deem'd by one and all;
And, caution'd by the fate of Troy,
'Twas fit more prudence to employ.
But of this danger, who could show it
So plainly as some scribe or poet?
Hence now a host of scribblers rose,
Resolved, in poetry or prose,
To have the honour and renown
Of writing this great evil down;
And bravely in the hazards share
That must attend a paper war.
Their forces to recruit, they sent,
To fetch supplies of argument,
Far as Geneva; which, indeed,
Came forward with amazing speed;
But then they were of little use;
And then they fell to foul abuse,
The weapon of the frail confest,
And for a doubtful cause the best;
Yet none could bind a chain around it,
And vex'd, they left it as they found it.

XXXIX.

Yet he at whom their darts were hurl'd,
Still sought the welfare of the world:
The thunders that around him roll'd
But made him more divinely bold.
So busy in his blest career,
He did not, or he would not, hear;
Nor paused, but with a brief reply,
Which yet he utter'd with a sigh;
Alleging, as was plainly true,
That he had better work to do.
And passing from polemic strife,
He left the answer of his life;

Which even foes at length confest
Was both the fullest and the best.

XL.

And there was one of noble name,
Whose heart confest a kindred flame;
Whose soul with heavenly ardour glow'd
To guard the honours of his God.
Devout and holy, wise and good,
He in the gap serenely stood;
And in his hand he held the sword,
The weapon of the written word;
And, with a zeal divinely bold,
Detected error's secret hold,
Brake down the fortress of its strength,
And saw its forces fly, at length,
Before the vigour of his mind,
As chaff is scatter'd by the wind.
His "Scales" were wisely made to weigh
The fondest errors of the day.
His "Checks" were timely to restrain
The ills of folly's lawless reign;
The truths of his devout "Appeal"
Were such as hardest hearts might feel;
And the pure ardours of his soul,
Ardours that sought the good of all,
Gave hallow'd sanction to the whole.

XLI.

To FLETCHER's hands 'twere safe to trust
A charge so great, a cause so just;
And to the man of much employ
It was a source of sacred joy
To be relieved, by friendly care,
From labours of polemic war.
Far other toils his thoughts engaged;
Far other wars he nobly waged.
With mortal sin, and human woe,
'Twas his to combat here below;

Nor had he time, nor had he will,
Inferior callings to fulfil.
His one great work, his heavenly call,
Was to restore the wand'ring soul;
And scatter, with unsparing hand,
The word of life throughout the land;
To raise the church from low estate,
And pluck the wretched from their fate;
To break the slumbers of the sleeper,
That seem'd as daily growing deeper;
To gather in the wand'ring sheep,
And gather'd, in the fold to keep;
To free the captive from his chain,
And bring the exile back again;
And lead from nature's wilds abroad
The stranger to a bright abode,
The house of prayer, and arms of God.

XLII.

Nor be that honour'd name unsung,
By tuneful fame distinguish'd long;
And for a pious zeal renown'd,
That bade the voice of praise resound;
And gave a tone, by happy lays,
To social and to public praise.
With kindly and fraternal care,
'Twas his a brother's toils to share,
And part in every burden bear.
With gifts of heavenly grace endued,
He sought the noisy multitude,
Stood in the storm of heedless hate,
As some bold messenger of fate;
Denouncing sin with courage brave,
And preaching Him who died to save.
The sinner's Friend he dared proclaim,
And call the lost to own his name;
And teach the harden'd to relent,
And urge the guilty to repent.

And many heard the warning voice,
That urged them to an instant choice;
And many, too, the warning felt,
And trembling own'd their shame and guilt,
Till mercy bade their sorrows cease,
And fill'd their hearts with joy and peace.

XLIII.

Enrich'd with talents from above,
And warm with fires of heavenly love,
His happy taste did not refuse
The kindly wooings of the muse.
Yet to religion's hallow'd shrine
He dared her offerings to confine;
Nor might her govern'd zeal inspire
The ardours of unhallow'd fire;
Nor might defilement ever stain
Her spotless, yet impassion'd strain.
Grace was his theme, his total song,
And this flow'd gently from his tongue,
With strength and depth of happy thought,
Beyond the poet's common lot;
That deck'd his lays with charms of fame,
And beauties of surpassing name;
Such as might happily impart
Devotion's ardours to the heart;
And such as in their turn express
Or hope, or pleasure, or distress.
Sweet singer! to the pious long
Right dear has been thy sacred song;
Thy hymns of praise were surely given
To lift our hearts and hopes to heaven.

XLIV.

He was a man of various worth,
Which shone with modest lustre forth;
A man of God, made meet to share
A parent's, or a pastor's care;
A friend of true and gentle mind,
A benefactor ever kind;

And in his station ever prone
The claims of wretchedness to own;
And, to pronounce his highest fame,
He loved the Saviour's precious name,
And wish'd all else to do the same.
Train'd to the service of the Lord,
And call'd to minister his word,
Long time he in the temple stood,
A model of the wise and good;
And saw his seed around him rise,
Till age began to dim his eyes;
And growing frailty seem'd to show
The close of all his cares below.
Then back a grateful glance he cast
On all the changes of the past;
And on the future, full of hope,
He thought, and look'd rejoicing up;
Then on his pillow laid his head,
And softly sigh'd, and sweetly said,
"Now let me catch a smile from thee,
And drop into eternity."

XLV.

Surviving, other cares to know,
His fall the elder brother saw,
And sigh'd;—'twas to affection due,—
Then pass'd his labours to renew,
Which yet it was heaven's will to bless
With great results, and glad success.
The rugged scenes which first he trod,
When passing to his toils abroad,
Had now received the living seed
That grew with unexampled speed;
And nurtured by the living word,
Bloom'd as the garden of the Lord.
Years and events of happy name,
In glad succession, pass'd and came.
At home, he saw the work go on,
A work confess'd of God alone;

And, as it grew from year to year,
Brought the long wish'd-for moment near,
When other lands, remote and far,
Might in the spreading glory share.

XLVI.

Directed by the hand of God,
His cares at length were cast abroad;
And eager to obey the call,
That bade him offer life to all,
The messengers of peace he sent
Far as Columbia's continent;
And to the isles where slaves complain,
Beneath the tyrant's galling chain;
And where, alas! are victims found,
By sin's relentless fetters bound.
Nor was the embassy unbless'd,
The truth of God was there confess'd;
And thousands heard the saving word,
And turn'd rejoicing to the Lord;
Right glad of heart to find them free
From sin's oppressive slavery,
And blest with hopes that nobly rise,
And rest on joys above the skies.

XLVII.

Thus lived he, happy to survey
The work accomplish'd in his day;
And thus did favouring heaven afford
His lengthen'd toils a large reward.
The glad surviver of the storms
Of riot, malice, and alarms,
That mark'd his early course, he stood,
As Joshua in old Jordan's flood;
Or Moses on the mount, secure
To tread the desert wastes no more.
Transfix'd with wonder and delight,
To gaze upon the gladd'ning sight,
So stood he on the mount, and saw
His gather'd flocks in tents below.

And now his noble work seem'd done,
His race of glory almost run;
While on some hill of vision, high,
He saw the land of promise nigh,
And waited but the word, to die.

XLVIII.

Beyond the date of mortal days,
A lingering sojourner he stays;
Spared to the church, in kindness spared,
As if by miracle, he shared
Surprising vigour. Still his mind
With ardour sought to bless mankind;
Till now his trembling hand betray'd
The mournful sign of strength decay'd.
His active limbs, and sprightly frame,
And sparkling eye of vivid flame,
His flowing tongue, and manly face,
Alike adorn'd with pleasing grace,
Before the rush of years gave way,
And bore the marks of swift decay.
Still at his post, amid the field,
The vet'ran stood, nor thought to yield;
And in his purpose aim'd to share
In other scenes of closing war;
Till now a voice pronounced, "Well done,
Receive the prize so nobly won:
Thy prayer is heard, thy wish receive,
'And cease at once to work and live:'
It is enough, thy charge lay down,
Resign the cross, and take the crown."

XLIX.

He listen'd, and rejoiced to hear
The voice that spake the Saviour near;
Then threw his batter'd armour by,
In token of glad victory.
"What need we more," he smiling said,
"What need we fear? why be dismay'd?

Our God is with us, on him call;
And will be, that is best of all."
And then, in sign of glorious hope,
His hand in death he lifted up,
"Farewell!" he sigh'd, with gentle smile,
And then serene he breath'd awhile,
Till with a bound from mortal clay,
His deathless spirit fled away.

L.

Thus calmly closed his great career;
Angels were present, God was near;
While round his couch a weeping train
Transfix'd in silent grief remain.
O, there was in that glorious death
A charm but rarely seen beneath.
It was a close that might declare
A course of spotless honour fair.
It was a finish fit to be
A bright reward of piety.
It was a dying comment given
On the mysterious ways of heaven;
And such as happy sanction brought
To the great truths so nobly taught.
'Twas scarcely death, but change of station,
A kind of mystical translation;
Which, though it laid the body low,
As dust to dust is doom'd to go,
Yet bore the rescued spirit high,
To brighter regions in the sky.
So in a car of mystic fire
The Hebrew seer was seen to' aspire
Above the clouds, and take his seat
Among the faithful and the great
Who worship at Jehovah's feet.

LI.

The soul had pass'd above, and left
The body of its guest bereft.

Lovely in ruins, there it lay,
A silent form of beauteous clay;
A soft, and scarce diminish'd grace,
Still linger'd on the smiling face;
Unruffled as in gentle sleep,
That dreams disturb not, sweet and deep.
Death had but gently touch'd his frame,
And seem'd to leave it much the same.
Mildly reposing, calm as even,
And brighten'd by a beam of heaven,
Serene he slumber'd, as some lake
Whose breast no ruffling breezes shake,
As radiant morning's golden beams
May gild the mountains and the streams;
So o'er that tranquil frame seem'd shed
A lustre that adorn'd the dead.

LII.

The sad event was felt afar,
And many a heart, with mournful care,
And more than filial sorrow pain'd,
Sigh'd o'er the loss by all sustain'd.
The nation felt it; and, though slow,
Justice gave gen'rous judgment now;
And many hostile once, confess'd
The noble virtues he possess'd.
Death had disarm'd the scorner's rage,
Which nothing else could e'er assuage;
The tongue of censure, loud and long,
Was changed into a kindly tongue;
And deeds once deem'd of evil name,
Now wore the meed of willing fame.
A life adorn'd with such a close
Compell'd respect from previous foes;
And pride, against its humbled will,
Confess'd its errors, and grew still;
While goodness, such as truth displays,
And in her candid thought betrays,
Gazed grateful, and gave God the praise.

LIII.

Yet had survivers lived to share
The solemn trust of public care;
And though the burden of their grief
Was heavy, yet they found relief,
Both in their ever faithful Lord,
And the firm promise of his word.
'Twas here they found, amid the shock,
The shelter of a stable rock.
Pledged to the cause their sire had loved,
Still faithful to the charge they proved,
And for their pious toils prepared,
Glad in the great design they shared.
They wept, 'twas to his memory due,
Then wiped their tears, and dared pursue
The task assign'd them to fulfil,
Assured that God was with them still,
And ever would be, while they strove
To carry out these plans of love.
So when on Nebo's radiant height,
Encircled with celestial light,
The Hebrew leader greatly fell,
To rise with Israel's God to dwell,
Around the scene, with mournful care,
The tribes in deepest wail repair;
Lament their loss with weeping eyes,
And speak their grief in heavy sighs;
Till now, their days of mourning past,
They urge their destined course at last.
With hope revived, and zeal renew'd,
Behold the moving multitude,
A blended and advancing band,
March onward, at their Lord's command,
To claim and share the promised land.

LIV.

That was a crisis full of care,
Nor might prophetic skill declare

What changes, urged by strife and pride,
Might seek to fetter, or divide
The men who lived but to maintain
The honours of their Saviour's reign.
Their bond of earthly union gone,
They seem'd awhile as left alone,
Without a pilot in a storm.
Yet needless was their brief alarm,
Their Captain took the chief command,
And led them with a skilful hand;
As on the Galilean lake,
In power he but arose, and spake,
And soon they saw the tempest cease,
And all around was joy and peace.

LV.

It was a time when prudent zeal
Alone could serve the public weal;
When wisdom only might control
The restless passions of the soul;
And gentle love's enlighten'd reign,
The schemes of changeful minds restrain.
One principle was early own'd,
And with surpassing safety crown'd;
The principle of strict regard
To all things in the written word.
In doctrine, as in government,
The obvious spirit and intent
Of truth reveal'd, as well suggested,
Was still with sovereign rule invested.
In other things 'twas held as fit
That to each other they submit;
But where the word of God decides,
And for the given case provides,
From that it were a dangerous zeal
For erring mortals to appeal;
Even conscience, free in all beside,
Is bound to follow this fair guide.

LVI.

Their first appeal was to the skies,
Nor God his timely aid denies;
While thus in faith and fervent prayer
They sought his counsel and his care.
God of our fathers! to thy throne
We make our humble wishes known;
This world is thine, yet far from thee
'Tis full of sin and misery.
And thine alone it is to bless
This wretched world with truth and peace.
If thou hast call'd us, Lord of all,
O teach us to obey the call;
With zeal that may for ever glow,
Give us to make the erring know
Thy saving truth and holy ways;
So shall the dumb proclaim thy praise.
Commission us afresh to be,
Great God, true witnesses for thee,
That all the land with us may prove
Thy peace, and righteousness, and love.
Then Britain's moral wastes shall share
The blessings of thy kindly care,
And bloom for ever bright and fair.

LVII.

The men of that eventful day
Were thus instructed in the way
Of social peace and glad success,
And, following after righteousness,
Walk'd forth, in strength divinely given,
To work the kindly will of heaven.
Released from earth's distracting cares,
And shelter'd from its tempting snares,
No hopes of greatness, or of gain,
Could o'er their simple wishes reign.
They were a race confess'd to be
Bright patterns of integrity.

The great example of their sire,
Had taught them early to aspire
Above the world, and dare to be
From every earthly fetter free.
Great in design, and pure in thought,
The pomps of earth they valued not,
But lived contented and resign'd
To serve the Lord, and save mankind.

LVIII.

The picture they divinely drew,
Display'd their Master full in view,
That all who saw might honour him,
Their only, and their endless theme.
Shades of the fathers, names of worth,
That erst had blest the needy earth,
Shall those who follow fail to be
The heirs of your meek piety?
Shall your successors cease to feel
The ardours of your early zeal?
Forbid it Heaven,—still with us dwell,
And guard what thou hast loved so well.
That, as succeeding races rise,
To serve the counsels of the skies,
Each generation may afford
Such men to minister the word,
Till all the earth beneath thy throne
With one consent shall bow, and own
That thou art God, and thou alone.

LIX.

Religion! theme of frequent song,
And sage discourse, to thee belong
Mysterious attributes; or why
Should learning, taste, philosophy
So strangely differ in opinion
About thy nature and dominion?
Some place thee in imposing forms,
And deck thy shrine with dazzling charms;

While others pay their court to thee
In unadorn'd simplicity.
Some dress thee up in garments gay,
And garland thee in flowers of May;
While some inwrap thy grace in gloom,
And make thee cheerless as the tomb.
In words and creeds there are who place
Thy total being, power, and grace;
While others, with impassion'd zeal,
Find thee alone in what they feel.
On stately grandeur some contend
Thy fame and force alone depend;
The world declares thee not severe
To censure what it holds so dear;
While rigid virtue stiffly states,
The world is what religion hates;
And that thou never wilt be found
Where vice and gaiety abound.

LX.

Thus various views, and various tastes,
Prevail among thy various guests,
And make it meet, if that may be,
To learn the truth alone from thee.
'Tis time the question be decided,
Which has the world so long divided;
And it remains for thee alone
To make thyself to mortals known.
Speak for thyself, mysterious fair,
Thy nature and thy name declare:
Of all the crowds thy courts who throng,
And speak of thee with various tongue,
Say, who is right, and who is wrong?

LXI.

"Mortals, attend, from heaven I came,
God is my sire, and Love my name;
And truth my strength, and grace my joy,
And blessing is my blest employ.

Nor words, nor creeds, nor outward show,
Compose my brightest things below;
These have their station in my train,
As subjects of my sovereign reign,
But these are not myself. I dwell
In gentle hearts that joy to feel
My hidden fires, which inly glow,
Without the pomp of outward show.
I love to breathe in gentle sighs,
And sparkle oft in tearful eyes;
With peace to soothe the throbbing breast,
And lull the anxious heart to rest.
I love to move, with kind command,
The efforts of the liberal hand;
To heal the sick, and cheer the sad,
And make the mournful spirit glad;
To break the chain that binds the slave,
The low to raise, the lost to save;
To follow where the wanderers roam,
And bring the banish'd exiles home;
In coldest hearts to raise emotion,
And kindle fires of pure devotion.

LXII.

"And further, if ye more would know,
'Tis mine to heal all human woe;
From pain to pluck the sting of grief,
And bring the burden'd sweet relief;
To teach the penitent to pray,
And wipe his gushing tears away;
The heart in righteousness renew,
And fill it with fair graces too,
And make, by love there shed abroad,
The child of wrath a child of God.
And then 'tis mine in social worth
To lead my happy subjects forth;
Adorn'd with virtues bright and fair,
Such as my honour'd children share:

Truth, justice, patience, faith, and love,
And high regards to things above;
Meekness, benevolence, and zeal,
Which but the wise and pious feel;
And which in these for ever shine,
For I am theirs, and they are mine.
Thus, mortals, hear; my mystic reign
Is not in pomp or worldly gain,
But in the heart, and in the life;
Remote from vanity and strife
I dwell, and am in all the same;
This is my nature, this my name:
In all am I, and I will be
Confess'd in pure simplicity;
In love my mystic charms reside,
And all is vanity beside."

LXIII.

The world had waited long to see
The times foretold by prophecy;
When pure religion from above
Should reign on earth in peace and love;
And many, running to and fro,
Should teach an erring world to know
The grace that makes all sorrows cease,
And fills the realms of earth with peace.
The harps of seers and saints of old,
In pleasing strains, divinely bold,
Had cheer'd the gloom of ancient night
With kind disclosures, fair and bright;
Such as celestial grace supplied,
The better hopes of men to guide;
And such as sounded full and free,
In notes of heavenly harmony.

LXIV.

Transported by the theme sublime,
Far in advance of ling'ring time,
The sacred bards, with soaring mind,
Left ages and events behind;

And fired with visions, full of grace
To man and his apostate race,
The lofty strain they thus begun :—
"A virgin pure shall bear a son ;
From lowly ground the plant shall rise,
And lift its branches to the skies,
And high above surrounding trees,
Shall wave its foliage in the breeze,
And yield its fruit in plenteous store,
To heal the sick, and feed the poor.
Its boughs abroad, divinely spread,
Shall shelter man's devoted head ;
Nor heat shall blight, nor storms beat down,
The noble plant of fair renown.

LXV.

" For He, the man thus named, shall reign,
And all his sovereign rights maintain ;
All sin and woe shall sink and fail,
And peace beneath his sway prevail ;
Joy o'er the earth her light extend,
And stainless bliss from heaven descend.
Fly swift, ye lingering years, away,
And haste to dawn auspicious day !
From nature's teeming bosom bring
The blushing progeny of spring ;
Ambrosia rich, and nectar sweet,
And odours of Arabia, meet
For courts of kings, and gems of earth,
Bring all to crown his peerless worth.
'Tis done, behold the valleys rise,
The mountains sink to own the skies ;
The forests bend their stately pride,
The gloom recedes, the storms subside,
And through the cheerless wastes afar
Sweet sounds salute the ravish'd ear ;
Prepare the way, make straight his path,
The Lord of all appears beneath ;

Rocks, hills, and seas resound his name,
Waft on, ye winds, his spreading fame,
And earth and skies his power proclaim.

LXVI.

"The Prince of grace assumes his sway,
Bend down, ye hills, ye seas, obey;
He comes, the Saviour long foretold;
Ye sages hear, ye saints behold.
He shall restore obstructed sight,
The deaf shall hear him with delight,
The dumb shall tuneful notes employ,
The tott'ring lame shall leap for joy,
The leper lose his spots, and death
Shall vanish from his quick'ning breath.
As some good shepherd's kindly care
Leads forth his guarded flocks, to share
Fresh pastures by the cooling stream,
Or shelter from the solar beam,
Or on his bosom bears the lambs,
Deserted by their wand'ring dams,
So shall his arm in safety keep
The flocks of his dependent sheep;
So shall our race his favour prove,
And rest beneath his guardian love.

LXVII.

"No more shall hostile hosts engage
In deeds of violence and rage;
The peaceful vale shall be no more
By warriors trod, or stain'd with gore;
The shining spear and reeking sword
Shall implements of peace afford;
Adapted thus to rural toil,
Rich harvests shall be all their spoil.
Then shall the swain, with sweet surprise,
See verdure in the desert rise,
And myrtles grow, and roses bloom,
Where all was barrenness and gloom.

Glad change! that to the thirsty brings
Or gentle streams, or gushing springs;
That thus supplants the prickly thorn,
And bids the fir the scene adorn.
Glad change! the wolf and lamb shall feed,
And graze together on the mead;
The lion and the kid shall be
From rage and timid terror free;
The calf shall couch beside the bear,
And each the same repast shall share.
In his soft hand a child shall take
The crested asp, or speckled snake,
And, unoffending, in his breast,
Thus playful hide the radiant crest.

LXVIII.

"Lift up thy head, O Zion fair,
Dear object of divinest care!
See how from far thy daughters come,
Thy sons, as to their long-sought home
Come on, thy fair abode to bless,
And share thy peace and righteousness.
Lo! nations alien long attend,
And at thy hallow'd altars bend;
Devoted kings and princely trains
Come crowding o'er thy bright domains,
Demanding with thy sons to share
The peace and joy prevailing there.
Arise and shine, imperial throne,
And call the subject world thine own.
Bright on thy beauties, far display'd,
Is seen a light that shall not fade;
Thy lustre shall for ever shine,
And heaven's eternal day be thine.
This solid earth shall melt away,
These skies, and all their pomp decay,
But thou shalt endless honour gain;
'Tis fix'd, thy empire shall remain,
And God, thy King, for ever reign."

BOOK THE SECOND.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE temple of Fame—the difficulties of access to it—the safety of lowlier aims—the changes and brevity of human life—the immutability of God—the progress of a hundred years marked by various events—the changing seasons—changes in the natural world—the moral world—the state of society when Mr. Wesley began his career—Wickliffe and Luther—William and other sovereigns—other changes had left the state of religion unchanged—a moral reformation most needed—few able to undertake it—when God has a work to do, he finds agents—he chooses such as men would not—the first race of Wesleyan Preachers—they were men of true piety and strong sense—endured many hardships—their people poor but pious—their fortitude and perseverance—honoured of God—the character of the people—some instances of talents and usefulness—sketches of the early Preachers—Maxfield—Westall—Nelson—Hopper—Oliver—Webb—Walsh—others briefly named—others shall arise in after-times—the principles of their faith—the progress of Christian experience—the effects of conversion—a case given in the history of Laura—to spread vital godliness the object of the Wesleyan ministry—the past and present state of the church contrasted—Wesleyan institutions are clearly providential—God is in all to be glorified—reference to a memorial of God's goodness to his people—this cause shall prosper in after-times, nor shall the gates of hell prevail against it.

BOOK THE SECOND.

I.

High on a hill of steep ascent,
Fame builds her tempting tenement,
'Mid rocky elevations, where,
Encircled with all bright and fair,
She looks below, yet points on high,
As wont to win the gazing eye;
And with a smile that kindles hope,
Thus beckons young ambition up.
Yet, who can tell how hard the toil
To climb, and catch her fickle smile?
Ah! who can tell the anxious care
That lifts the bold adventurer there?
Ah! who can say how many a check
Retards his course, who dares to seek
Her captious sufferance? Folly's frown
Will sometimes scare the aspirant down;
And timid fear, and rival claim,
Enfeeble, or obscure the flame
Of soaring passion, till at length,
Unequal and exhausted strength
Sinks down subdued, and wounded sore,
Despairing, gives the struggle o'er,
And leaves the wreath that charm'd his eyes
To bards of brighter destinies.

II.

Not so the man of lowly aim,
Who on religion builds his fame,
And, passing to her fair abode,
Asks but the praise that comes from God.

Not so the chasten'd zeal that tries
To win the sufferance of the skies;
Nor so the man who spurns the pride
That charms and cheats all hopes beside:
He shall the mount of honour gain,
And steadfast on its heights remain.
Where others fail, he shall succeed,
And on his rising course proceed;
With dignified composure, he
The proud beneath his feet shall see,
And plant firm footsteps where the good
Shall stand, as they have ever stood,
On moral elevations high,
In lofty converse with the sky.

III.

The oak, that claims a hundred years
Ere yet its perfect strength appears,
Will claim an equal course of days
Ere yet its hardy strength decays.
The victim of a swifter fate,
Man's being is of briefer date:
He, as some fair and transient flower,
Springs up, and blossoms in an hour;
And in an hour, or in a day,
Droops down, and sinks in swift decay.
Yet God remains in all the same,
Unchanged the honours of his name:
A thousand years may rise and roll,
Yet he remains the same in all;
The same his throne of mighty power,
The rock of mortal trust is sure,
Fix'd, and unchanged for evermore.

IV.

A hundred years! what strange events,
What hopes, and fears, and incidents,
Have mark'd the course of man's affairs
Within this hundred various years!

Proud kings, in all the pomp of state,
And royal honours, fair and great,
Have sat awhile upon the throne,
Then rose, and hasten'd to be gone.
Then others came, in swift succession,
And proudly took a brief possession;
And in their turn retired to show
How brief are all things here below.
Heroes have fought in battle fray,
And won bright honours in their day,
And having won them, pass'd away.
And births, and deaths, and peace, and war,
And private grief, and public care,
And loss by fire, and fearful storms,
And dread disease, and dire alarms;
And teeming population seen
Where human foot had never been;
These have, in every land and clime,
Mark'd the swift course of rolling time.

V.

A hundred years! since these began
What various times have pass'd o'er man!
A hundred winters, wild and cold,
In thunders have their terrors told;
A hundred springs, in youthful bloom,
Have in their turn exulting come;
A hundred summers, bright and fair,
With fervid heat, and fragrant air;
A hundred autumns, rich and free,
Have fill'd the empty granary.
The earth, in never-ceasing roll,
Through all her realms, from pole to pole,
Has greatly joy'd, or deeply mourn'd,
As ills or blessings have return'd.
The proud and poor, the grave and gay,
Have had, as all will have, their day;
And, having had it, pass'd away:

And youth to age has given place,
The previous, to the present race;
And these shall in their turn retire;
The son shall dispossess the sire;
And generations erst unknown
Shall come, and in their turn be gone;
The past are from their stations hurl'd;
And this is quite another world.

VI.

The moral world in darkness lay,
As waiting for the dawn of day,
When WICKLIFFE, named the "morning star,"
Of bright reform, with pious care,
Gave forth the truth from deepest shade,
And bade its light be far display'd.
And he, the hero of reform,
Who boldly braved the threat'ning storm,
Till slumbering Germany awoke,
To see, and spurn the Papal yoke.
Yet wide o'er all the British coast,
A deep and cheerless gloom was cast.
The priest dispassionate survey'd
The dreadful havoc sin had made;
But found in worldly pomp a charm
That drew his wishes from reform.
The public taste was made to be
Content with cold philosophy;
While speculations, wild and strange,
Pass'd from plain truth in restless range;
Till infidelity at length
Gave irreligion fearful strength,
And revolutions struck the thrones
Of many great and mighty ones;
And left the world a prostrate prey
To error and impiety.

VII.

By generous cares, and prudent thought,
The welcome change that WILLIAM wrought,

Had to the happy realm restored
Her injured rights, and well insured
The freedom that refused to own
The mandates of a foreign throne.
For long had Papal pride held sway,
And struggled still with vain essay
To fetter conscience with its chain,
And o'er a prostrate nation reign.
Yet all in vain, nor all could win
Submission to the man of sin;
Nor save his long usurp'd dominion
From the dread force of strong opinion.
For now awaken'd zeal decreed
The realm to be for ever freed.
And so it was, the realm was free,
According to the just decree.
Nor might the rage of hell revoke
The bold behest that spurn'd a yoke
Whose galling power, so long deplored,
A hundred ages had endured.

VIII.

Then came a state of better things,
To grace the reign of other kings;
And bright, amid serener skies,
To bless a nation's longing eyes,
The star of BRUNSWICK's house shone high,
In mild auspicious majesty.
What HENRY's passion would have done,
Was left for his illustrious son;
And what that son, too soon removed,
Had but projected and approved,
His sister, more illustrious still,
Was destined nobly to fulfil.
Then came her grave successor forth,
Pedantic, from the frigid north,
Distinguish'd from all other men
Less by his sword than by his pen.

'Midst scenes of tumult and of war
His ill-starr'd sons came on to share
Successive troubles, as a storm,
That ceased not till the great reform.

IX.

Reforms there had been, but 'twas strange
They were reforms without a change.
Vice still retain'd its ancient hold;
Devotion still was dull and cold.
And though reformers had been clever,
Things were as bad or worse than ever.
Dark clouds inwrapp'd the public mind,
The blind but grew more deeply blind;
Strong superstition held its ground,
And errors vile prevail'd around,
While Satan held dominion still,
And led all captive at his will.
And that which none had yet projected,
Which priests and people had neglected,
That wanted most throughout the nation
Was a great moral reformation;
Such as might raise religion's tone,
Revive the zeal long fled and gone;
The proud to tame, the vile rebuke,
Restore the lost, and break the yoke
Of sin and hell, and freedom spread,
And light on human darkness shed,
And heal the sick, and raise the dead.

X.

But who should this great work fulfil?
Who had the means, or who the will,
To such a field of toil to go,
And combat with so great a foe?
Could it be thought the vain would move,
And their own vanities reprove?
Could such a service ever please,
Who lived in splendour and in ease?

Would any man, whate'er his fame,
Prefer a life of toil and shame?
Would any man of woman born,
Resolve to brave reproach and scorn,
And hazard his fair reputation,
And set himself against the nation;
While well he knew, and could but see,
That the result to him would be
Privation, toil, or infamy?

XI.

When God has a great work to do,
He finds adapted agents too;
And often works, to humble pride,
By means that worldly men deride.
The boast of learning, rank, and power,
Of wealth, of talent, and of lore,
And all that men may mighty deem
Are little things in his esteem.
He gives the word, and when 'tis given,
Obedient to the will of heaven,
Behold, a host, an army rises,
And soon the slumbering world surprises
With deeds that greatness never dared,
And fame that heroes never shared;
To human weakness granting might,
That none may glory in his sight.
For what is human force to him,
Or all that men may mighty deem?
From things despised by scornful pride
God can efficient means provide,
To work what all accomplish'd skill
Were yet unable to fulfil.
Thus was it his high will to take
Apostles from Tiberias' lake;
And call his messengers to be
The fishermen of Galilee.
And what he did was wise and right,
To put to nought all human might;

Nor may ill-judging men complain,
If what he did, he does again.

XII.

The first of those thus call'd to share
The honours of this holy war,
Were Ministers of God's own making,
The world and all its hopes forsaking;
They were a race of men prepared
To work the pleasure of their Lord;
Of upright heart and honest zeal,
They spake of what 'twas theirs to feel;
And what they felt they publish'd too,
And only spake of what they knew.
Pardon they did important deem,
Because the Lord had pardon'd them.
Of God's good Spirit much they spake,
For they did of his gifts partake.
To the new birth they oft adverted,
Because they were themselves converted.
A *full* salvation they declared,
Because that blessing they had shared;
And hence the truth they dared to' impart,
Came warmly flowing from the heart.
The graces of their style were few,
View'd as the vain are wont to view;
But there was to their manner given
An energy that came from heaven:
And in their style of warm address
There was an artless emphasis,
That might the slumbering conscience reach,
Beyond the hopes of polish'd speech;
And work effects that plainly show'd
Their talents were the gifts of God.

XIII.

Of manly frame, and vigorous mind,
To hardship and to toil resign'd,
It was their early lot to share
But lowly home and scanty fare.

Few were their friends, and yet that few,
Though poor, were ever kind and true;
Distinguish'd by a warm regard
To the loved servants of the Lord.
'Twere pleasant and instructive too,
To hear some good old man review
What he had seen and knew for truth,
In early times, and walks of youth.
It would beguile the dullest night,
To hear the hoary sage recite
The strange events of other days,
His dangers, and escapes, and ways
Through which he past, in rain and cold,
And what the people were of old;
And how he then felt, nothing loath,
To sup perchance without a cloth;
Right glad to shelter in a shed,
And, as with artless smiles he said,
To crack a crust, and go to bed.
For hunger may, in Kent or York,
Dine well without a silver fork.
Yet it were worse, he smiled to own it,
To have a cloth and nothing on it.
Oft had he lain beneath a roof
That never had been waterproof,
Where he could see, through broken tiling,
The stars of heaven above him smiling,
While round him, and about, he saw,
Far other objects spread below,
Of earthly origin;—but these
Belong alone to by-gone days!

XIV.

Yet in these lowly haunts of worth
Were found the brightest gems on earth;
The richest specimens of grace
That ever deck'd a fallen race.
Meek, modest, simple, and content,
Their peaceful life was sweetly spent

In patient toil, and social care,
Relieved and cheer'd by praise and prayer.
The pride of life they valued not,
Their total world was in the cot
Where virtue found a meet abode,
And peace diffused its balms abroad,
And love was there, and heaven, and God.

XV.

Some were to hardships well inured,
And patiently their lot endured.
Reviled, they bless'd; despised, they bow'd,
And bore oppression's heavy load,
Confiding only in their God.
The persecutor's rage they met
With more of pity than regret.
Mock'd, pelted, mobb'd, and spurn'd of all,
In patience they possess'd their soul;
Rejoicing that the Lord should deem
Them meet to suffer thus for him.
And those whom Providence had blest
With many gifts above the rest,
Of what had been so freely given,
They freely gave back part to heaven.
With feelings not unfit for kings,
They still projected liberal things;
And being generous, wise, and good,
By liberal things they safely stood.

XVI.

Nor latter times have lost the fame
Of many a great and noble name.
The spirit of the sire has gone
To grace the virtues of the son;
And early days have handed down
Those deeds of honour and renown,
To warm the heart with heavenly fire,
And bid the rising race aspire,
To lofty thought, and ardent zeal,
Such as the good alone may feel;

And such as may in every station
Command devoted imitation.

XVII.

Thus, in distinguish'd rank, stood forth
The patriot name of BUTTERWORTH;
A man of virtue, meet to grace
The highest or the humblest place.
He was a friend who gave a tone
To feelings worthy of his own.
In great designs he led the way
To deeds that bless the present day.
Great in his times, he foremost stood
In counsels for the public good;
And, having loved and served the Lord,
Pass'd honour'd to his great reward.
And THOMPSON, too, whose spirit glow'd
With pious ardour for his God.
The early friend of mission zeal,
And patron of the public weal;
Now in the senate he displays
A prudence claiming highest praise;
And now amid the crowd he stands,
To urge the claims of distant lands.
And MARRIOTT, modest and retired,
Yet by a liberal zeal inspired;
He took his part in deeds of fame,
That early deck'd his honour'd name.
And LONGDEN, zealous for the Lord,
And HOLY, lover of the word,
And CARNE, of just and generous mind,
And HASLOPE, as discreet as kind,
And BULMER, steadfast in his zeal,
And SCOTT, who loved the cause full well;
And in the lists are written, too,
Of honour'd women not a few.

XVIII.

To change the scene, delightful change!
O'er other works of worth to range,

And make acquaintance with a few
Of those who met the public view,
As chosen messengers of grace
To man, and his rebellious race,—
Look at the men of noble mind,
In whom were worth and wisdom join'd;
In whom were native talents rare,
And moral strength beyond compare;
In this great work they led the way,
Thus well-adapted to their day.
The state of morals seem'd to claim
Great efforts of peculiar name;
And hence the men, by heaven employ'd,
Adapted qualities enjoy'd.
Some bosoms with warm feelings glow'd
Of zeal that won the soul to God.
Some, with resistless force of speech,
Knew how the sinner's heart to reach.
Some, in divinity deep read,
Could light on Gospel-doctrines shed:
And some, with eloquence and taste,
Could deck plain truths with beauties chaste,
And charm the crowds that list'ning hung
As captives of a flowing tongue.

XIX.

Maxfield, though truth must ever blame
The errors that obscured his fame,
And mourn the shades that gather'd o'er
A course that shone so bright before;
Yet that same truth cannot forget
What early honours beam'd on it.
First of an order call'd of God
To spread his saving truth abroad,
None earlier than himself sustain'd
The sacred office unordain'd.
He, as a son, to aid his sire,
Dared with devoted zeal aspire,

And lead the way, which well he led,
And on his path were blessings shed,
Till erring from that path he fell,
And marr'd what was begun so well.
But this regretted, honest fame
To him concedes the noble claim
Of being first of that fair band
Who, yielding to divine command,
Pass'd forth to bless a needy land.

XX.

And there was one of early fame,
A man of worth, though humble name,
Who had the happiness to stand
Among the first devoted band
That took the lead in olden days,
With zeal that aftertimes shall praise.
Devoted WESTALL, dared to brave
Full many a storm, and toil to save
His vile oppressors; meek to bear
Injurious rage, and bold to share
The clam'rous scorn of evil men;
Nor met their hate with hate again;
But to his lot of suffering bow'd,
From men appealing to his God.
Magnanimous, and unsubdued,
He warn'd the heedless multitude;
Persisting to proclaim the grace
That seeks to save a guilty race.
Nor evil hand, nor evil tongue,
Could silence his bold preaching long.
He saw the crowds around him dying,
And stood, as in the desert crying,
"Repent, and from destruction fly;
Believe, and ye shall never die!"

XXI.

For this, though strange, and this alone,
To him all violence was shown.

They seized his person, rudely seized,
And bore him fetter'd where they pleased;
And in the dungeon's darkest cell,
Consign'd the man of God to dwell,
And set a watch to guard him well.
There stood the prisoner of the Lord,
The faithful witness of his word;
The man of worth in durance vile,
Which yet he bore with patient smile;
Content his lot with those to take,
Who suffer for their Master's sake.
There was he great, and bright in all
That decks and dignifies the soul;
And greater there than when abroad,
He freely served the cause of God;
Now served, by meek submission, more
Than active zeal had done before.
There the deep gloom around him spread,
But on him brighter lustre shed,
And made the prison where he lay
A moral majesty display,
Bright as the walks of cloudless day.

XXII.

High in the lists of early fame,
Stood Nelson's well-remember'd name.
He was of an undaunted mind,
To hardship and to toil resign'd;
Whose noble spirit none could bend,
Nor his devoted zeal suspend.
A mind thus made divinely bold,
Nor mobs could check, nor prisons hold;
Nor vile contempt could damp his zeal,
Or fright him from the public weal;
Nor storms retard, nor mountains steep,
His spirit from its purpose keep.
Bold as a lion to maintain
The rights of his Redeemer's reign,

He, as another Baptist, came,
A greater than himself to name;
And in the desert wild and wide,
As with a warning voice he cried,
"Prepare the way, ye wilds, prepare,
The gifts of heavenly grace to share,
For lo, the Lord himself is near!"

XXIII.

He was a man of mighty mind,
That earthly fetters could not bind;
Firm as a rock, and bold to dare
Adventurous deeds beyond compare.
By grace renew'd, with lofty view,
He sought all others to renew,
And stood a witness for his Lord,
A faithful witness of the word.
From lowly station call'd to be
Thus great, a son of thunder he;
Whose bold rebukes, and fearless zeal,
Even hearts of senseless stone might feel.
Yet rage assail'd his early course,
What time the hand of heedless force
Restrain'd his freedom, yet remain'd
His patient spirit unrestrain'd.
Though chains the mortal frame may bind,
They cannot hold the deathless mind;
Nor his was held, but fled abroad
In love to man, and zeal for God,
Which long, with large success he show'd;
Till full of years, and deeds of fame,
Ripe to an honour'd grave he came;
Leaving a model meet to be
A guide to all posterity;
And passing to his great reward,
The joy and presence of his Lord.

XXIV.

And Hopper, early in the field,
Well taught the Spirit's sword to wield;

And just and sound in deed and word,
He bore true witness for his Lord.
Himself a pattern of the worth
That shone in early Christians forth;
Of simple manners, heart sincere,
Affection warm, and judgment clear,
Grave in the great concern that ought
To awe, or elevate the thought;
He dealt with souls as those who knew
Their value, and their danger too;
And lived and labour'd but to win
The wand'ring from the paths of sin.
Nor this in vain, his toils were blest,
Till late he sunk to glorious rest;
A veteran from his long campaign,
Returning to his home again,
Rich with the spoils so nobly won
By grace, that made them all his own,
And gave him an immortal crown.

XXV.

Of early note and fair renown,
And taste and talents all his own,
Was skilful OLIVER; in him
Were qualities that won esteem.
He was a man of various lore,
Enrich'd with learning's happy store;
And from that store his wit could bring
Or thoughts to please, or words to sting.
He would with ease, in warm debate,
His views of truth convincing state;
And boastful talkers of the town
He knew with ease to reason down.
The muses claim'd his tuneful tongue,
And gave their graces to his song.
And when he sung, or when he wrote,
In every word, and every note,
There was a sweetness and a charm,
That might the coldest bosom warm.

He lived in times that seem'd to claim
The skill and powers that gave him fame.
Thus greatly useful in his day,
He served the church, and sunk away,
Where evil may no more molest,
And where the weary are at rest.
Yet ere he sunk, with tuneful tongue,
"The God of Abraham" was his song;
"I shall," he cried, "His name adore,
And sing his praise for evermore."

XXVI.

Nor be the SOLDIER saint forgot,
To whom belong'd the noble lot,
With pious cares to traverse o'er
The deserts of a foreign shore;
And make the great salvation known,
That previous grace had made his own.
Thy wilds, America, have heard
The man of zeal proclaim the word;
The word of life, that grew and spread
Among the living and the dead.
That word remains, in fruits of grace
That bless large portions of thy race,
And shall remain, and greatly grow
Through all thy cultured vales below,
Till all thy spacious realms shall be
Divinely great, and truly free.

XXVII.

And one there was of pious fame,
Whose holy ardour, as a flame,
Bore him from Papal gloom away,
To own the light of Gospel day.
Youthful, yet grave, though bold, yet sage,
He braved the errors of the age;
Bore witness to the claims of truth,
And gave to God his early youth;

And God to him in favour gave
The zeal to bless, the will to save.
Uncheck'd by danger or by fear,
E'en life itself he held not dear,
So he might faithfully fulfil
The counsels of his Saviour's will.
Which soon he did, alas! too soon,
His cloudless sun went down at noon;
But threw a radiance back, to show
The dwellers in this world below,
How bright that sun in heaven would glow.

XXVIII.

Thus were it pleasing to recall,
Though but a portion of the whole,
A THOMPSON just, a MATHER sage,
A PAWSON, fitted for his age;
A TAYLOR, in affection strong,
A BRADBURN, with his flowing tongue;
A BENSON, sound in sacred lore,
A CLARKE, enrich'd with learning's store;
A COKE, with mission-fire inflamed,
A WOOD, with passions sweetly tamed;
A WATSON, blest by every muse,
Whatever theme his taste might choose;
Nor in the list of honour'd names
May friendship fail to place a JAMES.
Yet others shall in after-days
Establish claims to equal praise.
Another BARBER, firm and brave,
Shall slumber in an honour'd grave;
Another GRIFFITH rise and claim
A modest and a spotless fame.
Another MILES may rise and smile,
As free from vanity and guile.
Another GAULTER yet may reach
His happy readiness of speech.
And ere a hundred years be o'er,
Time may produce another MOORE.

XXIX.

To latter times thus God holds forth
Bright models of instructive worth,
And gives, who shall succeed to see,
What he intended them to be.
The first were brave, devout, and wise,
On earth devoted to the skies;
Simple of heart, and just, and good,
At first a gazing-stock they stood;
And men observed, and were in doubt,
Nor found the means to make it out,
Why men, to other interests born,
Should deign to bear contempt and scorn;
And with submissive patience choose
To brave a world of vile abuse.
There was in this a mystery,
Which worldly reason could not see.
And yet, when candour kindly thought,
It judged, who choose so strange a lot,
Whatever might at first appear,
Though much mistaken, as was clear,
They must, at least, be deem'd sincere.

XXX.

The views of erring men to them
Were matters of but light esteem;
The object of their chief regard
Was the approval of their Lord.
For this, with cautious steps they moved,
Nor from the path of wisdom roved.
For this they watch'd with constant care,
And lived in piety and prayer;
Still looking, with expecting eye,
For richer blessings from on high.
They read the word with studious zeal,
And what they read they strove to feel;
And what they felt as good and true,
They meekly sought to publish too.

Thus, by a life of humble love,
They sought all censure to remove;
And by a virtue bright as day
To shine the shades of blame away.
They look'd to heaven with steadfast eye,
From man appealing to the sky,
Because their record was on high.

XXXI.

Their worth declared, their feeling now
It were an easy task to show;
For the true kingdom of the Lord
Is not in meat, or drink, or word:
'Tis not in pomp, or dazzling show,
Of what we do, or what we know;
Tis not in forms, however fair;
In outward things, it is not there;
Nor cometh in external pride,
'Midst worldly splendour to reside.
The kingdom that contends with sin
Is not without, but deep within;
Where all the subject passions own
The mystic sovereign on his throne,
Presiding with supreme control
The ruler and the Lord of all;
Thus making every thought obey
The dictates of his rightful sway.
All comely graces to impart,
He sits enthroned upon the heart;
And in that heart, his chosen range,
He works a great and glorious change.
Then all the gloom of cheerless night
Gives place to beams of heavenly light.
Thus He who first on darkness shone,
And bade chaotic shades be gone,
Shines forth, as when the solar ray
Gives happy pledge of dawning day,
And chases murky night away.

XXXII.

Conviction first the proud disarms,
And fills the soul with fierce alarms,
And with a deep and rapid dart
Pierces the late relentless heart.
Nor may as yet the throbbing breast
Find the repose of balmy rest,
Till surging through the troubled soul
The billows of dire anguish roll;
And heavy groans succeed to sighs,
And tears suffuse the streaming eyes;
Convulsive throes, of fearful name,
Heave through the agonizing frame;
And for the moment nought is there
But deep distress and dark despair;
While in the stormy spirit reigns
The frightful fear of hellish pains.
Thus, broken with compunctious care,
The penitent presents his prayer;
When in the crisis of his grief,
When nothing else could bring relief,
Through tears he views the Crucified,
And marks the cross on which he died.

XXXIII.

That was a moment richly fraught
With joy and peace beyond all thought,
He gazed, with eye intense, to see
The heights of mournful Calvary;
For now the sight had quell'd his fears,
Subdued alarm, and dried his tears.
The storm of penitence subsides,
His trembling heart in Christ confides;
His fetters are removed, and he
Leaps forth in glorious liberty.
His previous load is strangely gone,
And now he leads rejoicing on;
A sinner saved, he bounds along,
Joy in his eye, and on his tongue

Is praise so loud, that all around
May plainly hear the joyful sound.
And now, in his enraptured view,
All nature seems divinely new;
The sky was never half so fair,
Nor half so sweet the balmy air;
The morning never shone so bright,
Nor so serene the stars of night.
The waving grove, the flow'ry dale,
The lofty mount, and lowly vale;
The choral birds, and gentle streams,
More pleasing than before, he deems.
The spot, the season, and employ,
Each in its turn improves the joy.
So when of old a sudden storm
Fill'd the disciples with alarm,
The Saviour to the surging lake,
With all-commanding greatness spake;
His potent fiat to fulfil,
The winds and waves obey'd his will,
And in an instant all was still!

XXXIV.

Before the heart in God confides,
It tries a thousand things besides;
Nor till all other hopes have past,
Will man confide in God at last.
Yet the attempt were all in vain,
To seek from earthly things to gain
What but religion can bestow,
To bless our needy race below.
For Christ is all; his strength our stay;
His love our heaven; his grace the way;
His truth our trust; and his blest word
At once our shield and flaming sword.
Who know him know the way of peace;
Who trust him, feel their sorrows cease;
Who taste his love, so rich the store,
Contented thus, will ask no more.

The soul that is acknowledged his,
In him shall find abiding bliss;
And all his saving power who prove,
Shall taste on earth the joys above;
And ere they rise to glory, know
His love can make a heaven below.

XXXV.

This truth to show, in proper place,
Here pause we, to supply a case.
LAURA was young, and gay, and fair,
The object of the kindest care
That fondness ever felt; for she
Had known, from early infancy,
The fostering tenderness that strove
To shield her with parental love.
Thus train'd, in courts perchance to shine,
Or grace the circles, where combine
Earth's brightest things, to bless the gay,
And shine the shades of life away;
For she was born to fair estate,
And take her place among the great,
And tread the paths where wealth and pleasure
Are strangely deem'd earth's only treasure.
For there 'tis held a bliss to be
From every serious feeling free;
And there 'tis felt a kind of fault,
To entertain religious thought;
And there the gay esteem it rude
For meek devotion to intrude.
For where, in scenes of pomp and feast,
Is goodness held a welcome guest:
The timbrel and the dance are there,
And pious thought and serious care
May not in gay diversion share.

XXXVI.

Yet LAURA fail'd to find in these
Repose of heart, or charms to please

A mind, that, after all, confest
A painful want of peace and rest.
And yet with eager search she sought
This absent good, but found it not.
Yet sought again, with restless strife,
To find this richest balm of life;
And thus perplex'd, she sighing stood,
Concern'd to gain the greatest good.
She seized her harp, and playful sought
With music to beguile her thought;
The pages of amusing lore
She turn'd intensely o'er and o'er.
Then sought the bright assembly, where
The brilliant meet to banish care;
And then she pass'd to rural seats,
And traversed solitude's retreats,
To hear the tuneful river roll,
Or see the foaming waterfall;
Or listen to the vocal groves,
Where feather'd songsters chant their loves.
And then she sought the city fair,
To gaze on all the glories there,
And find a solace for her care.

XXXVII.

Yet these, alas! were all in vain,
And but increased the mystic pain,
That they were impotent to heal,
And only made her deeper feel.
Nor could she give a reason why
Her heart was ever prone to sigh.
But well she knew her aching breast
Betray'd a want of peace and rest.
A void was in her bosom still,
Which all the world could never fill;
And what she wanted to receive,
She own'd the world could never give.
Some mystic power, as yet unknown,
The emptiness of earth had shown.

The spirit of celestial grace
Had error's mists begun to chase;
And now she felt the world a fetter,
And sigh'd, and sought for something better.

XXXVIII.

This anxious feeling, big with fate,
Had led her lingering heart, though late,
To seek religion, which possest,
At length she saw could give her rest.
'Twas ruling heaven that led her way
To where the pious love to pray;
And where the cottage Preacher, plain,
Proclaim'd the Lamb for sinners slain.
With artless earnestness and zeal,
Whate'er he said he seem'd to feel;
And those who listen'd seem'd to share
His kindly and impassion'd care.
Then first she felt her need of grace,
The theme was suited to her case;
As in behalf of Christ he spoke,
"Come, learn of me, and bear my yoke;
Recline in safety on my breast,
Believe, and I will give you rest."
She heard, nor linger'd to confide
In Him, for sinners crucified;
And trusting in his name, she felt
At once relieved from sin and guilt;
The good long sought she now possest,
And shared the sweets of peace and rest.
As when abroad the lonely dove
Did o'er the waste of waters rove,
Nor on that world of waves could meet
A place on which to rest her feet;
Till whirling back, her wanderings past,
She rested in the ark at last.

XXXIX.

Such trophies it were great to win
From walks of gaiety and sin;

And such in early times were won,
The power of saving grace to own.
These, for the Saviour and the cross,
Were well content to count but loss
All earthly good, and Christ receive
As more than all the world could give.
For his dear sake, with noble mind,
They all the pomps of earth resign'd;
And having, with a heart renew'd,
Renounced the giddy multitude,
In sweet companionship with worth,
They pass'd in paths of pleasure forth,
Walking abroad in glorious light,
They shone in virtues ever bright;
Sharing rich joys, which as a river
Flow'd on in swelling streams for ever;
Still tending to their parent sea,
The ocean of eternity.

XL.

This vital godliness hath shed
Its quick'ning influence on the dead,
And on the living hath bestow'd
Much more of all the life of God.
Not bounded by a narrow span,
Religion is for every man;
Nor may sectarian interests bind
God's equal gift to all mankind.
'Tis free as air, and wide as earth,
And passes unrestricted forth;
And, as the sun of boundless sway,
Gives every land the light of day;
Or as the rains of heaven, that fall
With far-spread plenitude on all.
Religion is a feast prepared
By the vast bounty of the Lord,
And by his blessed will design'd
As ever free and unconfined.

Nor may man's littleness restrain
Its spacious range, or spreading reign.
The grace that is to some applied,
Is not to any one denied,
But offer'd free to all beside.

XLI.

Survey the work of WESLEY's hands,
As seen beyond the little bands
That bear his name! Look forth and see
How many others yet there be
Who indirectly gather spoil
Resulting from his previous toil.
The Church of Britain slumbering lay,
To sloth and apathy a prey:
Her latent energies suspended,
Truth's gold with dross of error blended;
Her light, that should have shone abroad,
Scarce glimmer'd in the way to God;
And she, who had all means to bless,
Seem'd lull'd in drowsy carelessness.
Her priesthood, fashion'd to the times,
Scarce seem'd to frown on public crimes;
Soft, brief, and cautious of offending,
To taste and fashion condescending;
Her Homilies were harmless themes,
Which none might censure for extremes;
And only to religion leaning,
Few ask'd, and fewer felt their meaning.

XLII.

But see her now in zeal renew'd,
And view her as she may be view'd.
On her appears the welcome token
Of life restored, and slumber broken.
The lustre of her hallow'd shrine
With clearer light begins to shine;
Her once deserted domes resound
With solemn songs that rise around,

And, as from hearts sincere they rise,
Meet kind acceptance in the skies.
Too few her temples to contain,
Who throng admission there to gain;
And while these temples multiply,
The wants of thousands to supply,
Within them now is plainly heard
The doctrines of God's holy word,
With bold and fearless zeal asserted,
That those who hear may be converted.

XLIII.

This mighty change, and bright reform,
Invests the Church with pleasing charm,
And was the burden of his prayer,
Who sought it with unceasing care;
Though not permitted here below
The whole of what he wish'd to know.
Though other agencies were made
In this great work to lend their aid,
And other instruments are known
Thus to have raised religion's tone;
Yet candid truth cannot conceal
How greatly WESLEY's early zeal,
Though manifest in lowly station,
Contributed to bless the nation;
And bring about, by happy moment,
This great and manifest improvement.
By glad reaction, 'tis as though
The man reputed as her foe,
Should prove her greatest friend below.

XLIV.

When first this glorious work began,
No skill had sketch'd its previous plan;
No outlines had been drawn, in hope
Of future means to fill them up;
No scheme of government was given,
Save that which seem'd to come from heaven.

Rules were suggestions that arose
From evils which they dared oppose,
And which for order might provide,
Or in perplexing cases guide.
Nor previous codes, nor previous creeds,
Had fix'd the rule of views or deeds,
Save as the word had well decided,
And for the given case provided.
Taught by the wisdom from above,
Or what to shun, or what approve,
And, list'ning to the voice of years,
A voice which but experience hears,
The whole economy acquired
A fitness to the end desired;
And seem'd, in the observer's eyes,
To wear the sanction of the skies.

XLV.

There was in all a clear display
Of providence in kindly sway;
For God, his counsels to fulfil,
Works when, and where, and how he will;
And by his wisdom leads his own
Forth by a way they had not known.
Thus Israel, to the land afar,
Pass'd forth beneath his guardian care.
Nor map, nor chart, nor guide had they
To track or trace their devious way,
Save the bright cloud or pillar given
To teach them to confide in Heaven.
Of daily food they had no more
Than for the day a timely store,
That they might daily trust the sky,
And not forestall the kind supply.
The various toils in which they shared
Had not been previously prepared;
But, as the moving cloud suggested,
Now they moved on, and now they rested.

So, in a case of lowlier name,
The rule of heaven was much the same;
And in the time of greatest need
He bade his servants still proceed,
And shape their course as he decreed.

XLVI.

Man in a work like this is lost,
Nor may he of his wisdom boast;
Nor name his skill with air of pride,
Nor in his vaunted strength confide.
Ah! what is he? a thing of nought!
Of feeble form, and erring thought;
In such a work frail man is less
Than nothing, and his glad success
Is not of might or skill his own,
But by the Spirit's power alone.
Let man and means to nothing fall,
For God in this is all in all.
The glad memorial raised to show
What God hath done for man below,
Is but a lowly token given
Of pious gratitude to heaven.
The instrument may claim our love,
The praise alone is due above.
Bright be the honours of the man,
Whose govern'd zeal the work began;
But brighter, infinitely bright,
Be His renown, who has the right.
No name but his confess'd shall stand,
To win the wonder of the land;
Let this in records bold and fair,
Before the world be written there;
And "Soli Deo Gloria" be
The only motto men may see.

XLVII.

This is of God! This work divine,
Eternal Power, is only thine!

'Twas thine alone to make it bear
The sanction of thy early care;
And thine alone to make it still
Work in the world thy sovereign will.
The waves that roar around the pole,
And on the coasts of nations roll,
The terrors of a thousand storms
That fill the earth with wide alarms,
The thunders that may rend the sky,
The lightning's flash that flames on high,
May roar, and roll, and peal, and fly,
And nations sink, and nations rise,
And time o'erwhelm both earth and skies,
Yet this shall stand in all secure,
And all the tests of time endure.
This cause in all events shall stand,
Upheld by God's almighty hand;
Amid the shock of mortal things,
The pomp of state, the pride of kings;
The truth, as an eternal rock,
Unmoved, shall brave earth's final shock;
And the loved church shall never fail,
But, though the gates of hell assail,
The gates of hell shall ne'er prevail.

XLVIII.

Ah! had we but the means to know
What yet awaits the church below;
Were it permitted us to see
What shall in future ages be;
How many noble, yet unborn,
Will rise, and all her ranks adorn,
And be in prosperous labours more
Divinely blest than all before.
The brightest names of living worth,
That shine with pleasing lustre forth,
Though high and fair, may own at last,
Their fame by others far surpass'd.

XLIX.

Yet were it not for man to say,
How bright shall be the latter day;
Nor may his bounded vision roam
O'er scenes and seasons yet to come.
It is enough for him to know
That each succeeding age below
Shall higher rise, and brighter shine,
In peace and purity divine.
It is enough that Heaven's high will
Shall all its great designs fulfil.
God's work is perfect, and his arm
Shall other prodigies perform;
Nor aught shall hinder or restrain
The triumphs of his prosperous reign.
Till bright, beneath auspicious skies,
In the waste wilderness shall rise
Another Eden from the void,
Fairer than that which sin destroy'd,
And deck'd with charms that shall endure
Till time itself shall be no more.

BOOK THE THIRD.

THE ARGUMENT.

An apostrophe to beauty, as displayed in the forms of creation —the superior claims of moral beauty—an illustrative case given in the means and circumstances of a true conversion to God—the effect of the change—the history of Wesley resumed —he visits Scotland—and Ireland—his general character—virtues—talents—sufferings—and public labours—his fortitude —patriotism—and public spirit—general remarks on his manners and measures—striking incidents in his life—the scene of Epworth and his escape—the voice of God as full of majesty—God acknowledged—Wesley's taste—the lake—the waterfall—the pastoral office—the true succession—the comforts of peace and love in the Church—general principles stated—justification by faith—the witness of the Spirit—a present salvation—entire sanctification—these principles taught by the first Preachers—a recurrence to a few names—Mather—Pawson—Wood—Bradburn—Benson—Clarke—Barber—Griffith—Murlin, Bardsley, and Bramwell—Watson—all cannot be given—their general character—others invited to copy them—their apology—the fairest scenes of earth are scenes of moral vileness—kindly inquiries—the high resolves of Missionary zeal—prayer for assistance—the pleasing result in the peace of the world—and the boundless reign of Christ.

BOOK THE THIRD.

I.

Beauty ! I hail thee all divine,
First-born of heaven, who made it thine
Bright on all glorious things to shine.
With pleasing charms, pervading all
Creation round, from pole to pole,
Thy universal presence gives
Grace and delights to all that lives.
Thy lovely image stands impress'd
Or on the mountain's swelling breast,
Or on the vale, in lowly pride,
Or on the ocean's flowing tide ;
Or on the sun that gilds the day,
Or sinks beneath the wave away.
I see thee in the flow'ry spring,
When birds, to greet thy glories, sing,
And in the bower, and in the grove,
The native scenes of peace and love ;
And in the forest's lofty trees,
That wave their branches in the breeze ;
And in the morning's rosy light,
In evening calm, and silent night.
The silvery lake and crystal stream
Reflect around thy pleasing beam ;
In all of earth, and all of heaven,
Thy light and loveliness are given,
To send their bright'ning beams abroad,
And fill the universe of God ;
Or gild his temple, built to be
Adorn'd and beautified by thee.

II.

Ah! tell me not of sprightly forms,
Or youthful bloom, or rosy charms;
The beauty that has means to please,
Must wear a brighter name than these.
Primeval beauty, shining forth
In all the forms of moral worth;
Here her celestial charms serene
Are in their brightest lustre seen,
In holy peace, and heavenly love,
Such as pervade the realms above;
In kindly thought and generous zeal,
Such as the meek and noble feel;
In mystic glow of pure emotion,
Such as inspires a true devotion;
In tender tears and gentle sighs,
Such as true sympathy supplies,—
In these is beauty ever bright,
That may administer delight;
For these are fair in mortal shade,
And shine when all beside shall fade,
In all that charms, more glorious far
Than gem, or sun, or moon, or star.

III.

The world had once the power to charm,
And win my erring wishes, warm
In quest of what I could not find,
Content of heart, and peace of mind.
Then through the rounds of pleasing things
I ran, and drank the deepest springs
Of earthly good, till they were dry,
Nor could another drop supply;
And yet, athirst, I came again,
But came, as oft before, in vain;
And then, with disappointed pride,
Some change in gay pursuits I tried,

And hoped, perchance, society
Of youth, or wit would comfort me;
Or pleasure, on her tempting breast,
Would lull my anxious cares to rest.
And yet companionship with these
Could scarcely for a moment please;
Some sting annoy'd, or some vexation
Betray'd my erring expectation,
And left me, all my projects past,
The sport of wretchedness at last.

IV.

Till late, 'twas on a summer's day,
I led along the public way,
Regardless where, without design,
Or end, or wish, or thought of mine,
Save to relieve a load of care,
For which I wander'd anywhere.
There was, beneath a spreading tree,
A gather'd rustic company,
That seem'd with eager eye to gaze,
Transfix'd in motionless amaze
At one, who to the list'ning crowd
With earnest ardour spoke aloud;
Yet sweetly as an angel spoke,
At which, as from a dream, I woke.
Attracted by a sight so new,
Nearer and nearer still I drew,
And heard, as others met to hear,
Yet linger'd, backward to draw near;
Till growing ardent with his theme,
He plainly spoke of the Supreme,
Who loved our race, and gave his Son
To win our hearts, thus dearly won.
And then, with solemn air, he said,
"Why seek ye that which is not bread?
Come to the waters; dare believe;
Come, and the gift of God receive;
Yea, freely come, and drink, and live."

V.

Then came a thrilling through my soul,
And grief began to rise and roll.
As pierced by some mysterious dart,
The pain lay heavy at my heart:
Myself a wretched worm I saw,
And then the tears began to flow;
And then with cares unfelt before,
I dared compassion to implore;
My errors own'd, with deepen'd grief,
And cried aloud for kind relief.
Nor long was pardoning grace delay'd,
The hand of mercy raised my head.
The burden of my sin was gone,
And praise and joy became my own,
Such as the earth, though fair and gay,
Could neither give nor take away.

VI.

Then beauty was in all I saw,
The heavens above, and earth below;
The mount, and mead, and flowing streams
Were bright with unexampled beams;
And nature look'd no longer rude,
But shone, as like myself, renew'd
With youthful bloom, and pleasing grace,
Unfolding fair in every place.
Then joy that could not be suppress'd,
For utterance struggled in my breast,
And passing to my tuneful tongue,
Burst out in an extatic song
Of praise impassion'd, which to heaven
Through all my future life be given.

VII.

Meantime the man of many cares,
To other scenes of toil repairs.
Unwearied as the ceaseless sun,
Intent his glorious race to run.

He but appear'd, and left behind
The happy impress of his mind,
And then pass'd on, a pilgrim he,
From local fetters ever free:
His parish was the world at large,
And all mankind his equal charge.
His business was the care of souls,
Wherever found between the poles;
And his expansive wishes sought,
That all should to the Lord be brought;
That all the earth should thus behold
The promised blessing long foretold,
And own one Shepherd and one fold.

VIII.

Scotland! of cold and chilling clime,
Thy barren hills are yet sublime;
Which may perchance an emblem be
Of thy preferr'd theology.
Land of the thistles guarded down,
Of learned lore, and proud renown,
The bard's abode, and warrior's grave,
Land of the prudent and the brave;
Not seldom on thy heights was seen
The man of zeal, with glowing mien,
Intent to raise religion's tone
To vital ardours like his own.
Warm with the love of God and man,
He sought afar the Highland clan,
The city fair, or rural plain,
Nor did he seek them all in vain.
There were a few who caught the flame,
That kindles at the Saviour's name;
And dares to heaven itself aspire
In all the warmth of holy fire.

IX.

Land of the shamrock! Erin's pride,
Gem of the ocean's silvery tide,

In vain thy sunny hills arise,
Steep'd in the radiance of the skies:
In vain thy ardent children toil
To gather blessings from the soil:
A blighting evil blasts thy hope,
And only heaven can lift thee up.
Yet he whose cares extended far,
Deign'd for thy happiness to care;
In perils oft, and toils, and pains,
He traversed thy oppress'd domains;
Sought thy devoted friend to be,
And in his progress offer'd thee
The truth that sets the fetter'd free.

x.

The man is gone; but well-defined
His picture still remains behind,
Drawn out in lines so strong and true,
That all who will may clearly view
The moral painting, rich and fair,
And own the graphic likeness there.
Though bright his eye, and mild the grace
That gave expression to his face;
Though fair his form, and firm his gait,
His manner active, person neat,
With pleasing voice, of gentle tone,
And smile peculiarly his own;
Yet that which gave a charm to all,
Was the meek virtue of his soul.
There was a vigour in his thought,
That in its efforts falter'd not;
A clear perception, quick and bold,
That on the truth at once took hold,
Detecting sophistry, and spurning
All error, spite of gay adorning.
The flights of his unfetter'd mind
Were yet to simple truth confined;
And simple words, of plain constructions,
Embodied all his bold inductions;

And force, and brevity of style,
That might instruct and not beguile,
In which the humblest could but find
The marks of a superior mind:
These, to his person and his name,
Gave pleasing charm and lasting fame.

XI.

I would express him meek and brave,
Nor lightly gay, nor stiffly grave;
A Christian warrior in the field,
Prepared the Spirit's sword to wield,
And lead the forces of the skies
Against a host of enemies.
Fraught with the lore of early ages,
Discreetly cull'd from classic pages,
He could delight the tasteful ear
With strains it was a treat to hear.
Learning he had without its pride,
And love, from heaven's own fount supplied;
And wit, when it were wise to use it,
He could employ, and not abuse it.
He often foil'd the sceptic's boast,
In that of which he vaunted most;
Yet his chief glory was to dwell
On heavenly love unspeakable.
Here he grew copious, as at home,
With happy eloquence to roam
O'er scenes familiar; or to dwell
On truths he knew, and loved so well.

XII.

He was magnanimous, not rude,
But full of native fortitude;
Could stand amid conflicting storms,
Calm and serene in all alarms.
Of upright heart, and conscience pure,
He could the rage of men endure;
His glance alone oft quell'd a riot,
And awed the bold to instant quiet.

And if to controversy driven,
His brief replies were brought from heaven;
Which, if he paused to utter, then
He utter'd, and went on again.
He held control he never sought,
And in his rule abused it not.
He had a load of public care,
Yet this he was content to bear;
Not as the badge of lofty station,
But as entail'd on his vocation.
He was benevolent in all
The kindly projects of his soul;
And selfishness in him gave way
To charity's expansive sway.
He was laborious; and abroad
Early he pass'd to serve his God,
And late returned, for in employment
His active mind found sweet enjoyment.
He was exact; the people knew
That he was to his promise true;
And could depend that, where expected,
The waiting would not be neglected.

XIII.

He was a patriot warm and true,
The interests of the realm he knew,
And loved them well, and labour'd hard
With pious cares to urge or guard.
And he was loyal; nor the nation
Beheld in any rank or station
A man of more devoted zeal,
To guard the throne and public weal.
And he had faith in things unseen,
In which he held the golden mean;
Nor all he heard as truth received,
Nor all perversely disbelieved.
And he in things accounted small
Confess'd the hand of Heaven in all.

And incidents as they arose,
He view'd a providence in those;
And felt, or when he toil'd or slumber'd,
As Heaven his every hair had number'd.
He loved the young, and often smiled
In his kind arms to grasp a child;
And while that child he stood caressing,
Forgot not to pronounce a blessing.
Thus where he came he left behind
Some comfort which he did not find;
And passing thence bore forth abroad
His highest praise,—"a man of God."

XIV.

Great men, as mortals count them great,
And yet in virtue incomplete,
And often those of brightest fame
Have won the meed of noble name
By some one act, or virtue rare,
And rest their claim to greatness there.
Thus CÆSAR was for valour praised,
And BRUTUS love of freedom raised,
And CATO for contempt of life,
And SOCRATES for peace in strife,
And PLATO for the mystic lore
That his great master taught before,
And CICERO for silver tongue,
And MARO for impassion'd song,
And HOMER for the skilful cares,
That sung so well the Grecian wars;
Yet none of these was ever found
In every virtue to abound;
But some one act of worth alone
Supplied their claim to high renown.
Yet Christian virtue is complete
But where all Christian graces meet,
And in their blended lustre show
The light of heaven, that loves to glow
In all its round of rays below.

XV.

"Ambition is a glorious fault;"
So ancient sages strangely taught.
He was ambitious, slander said,
And often this great fault betray'd:
And this were true, if understood
Of lofty aims at doing good;
But in no other sense than this
Was aught esteem'd ambition his.
He was enthusiastic too;
Now whether this were false or true,
Or good, or bad, must be referr'd
To the fix'd meaning of the word.
If to be warm and wisely zealous,
Be what is meant, then plainly tell us,
Did not the state of things require
The ardour of this heavenly fire?
You blame not men of taste and trade
For warmth in their pursuits display'd.
That he was warm the nation knows,
But was he warm without a cause?
O'er all the ardours of his soul
Discretion held a high control,
And pity glowing in his breast
Refused to let the labourer rest.

XVI.

His lengthen'd life, of great events,
Had yet some special incidents
So mark'd with mercy, as to show
The care of Heaven for men below.
In perils oft, by sea and land,
Yet held secure in God's right hand;
Nor cold nor heat, nor flood nor storm,
Though wild and fierce, could work him harm.
Of these events 'twere meet to name
The earliest, of peculiar claim,
In which that life became defended,
On whose defence so much depended.

XVII.

The evening hour had closed with prayer,
And with it closed the father's care.
Wrapp'd in the arms of sweet repose,
No sign foretold impending woes;
No token that engenders fear,
Had raised a thought of danger near;
No dream disturb'd the balmy sleep
That peace had render'd sound and deep.
The sire, and his domestic train,
Calm on their downy couch remain,
Till now the midnight hour is nigh,
The waning moon walks down the sky,
The wint'ry winds, with chilling force,
Unheeding rush along their course,
While rustic villagers around
In sleep, that toil had made profound,
Shared in the quietude, that now
Pervaded all the scene below,
And nothing yet of fire or storm
Was present to produce alarm.

XVIII.

At length the scene of terror came,
And falling sparks, and spreading flame
Awoke the slumberers, waken'd late,
To shun what seem'd impending fate:
Yet from the flaming ruin driven,
Or pluck'd as by a hand of heaven,
The sire, as by some angel led,
From the appalling peril fled,
And with him nobly bore away
His loved, but houseless, progeny.
Nor all escaped; there yet was one,
A cherish'd and a favourite son,
Whom infant frailty held awhile
Exposed, amid the flaming pile.
The gathering flames around him spread,
And hover'd o'er his infant head;

His safety seem'd beyond all hope,
And sad affection gave him up.
Yet Heaven had otherwise decreed;
The menaced child, in hour of need,
Was yet reserved for deeds of worth,
Or known or felt throughout the earth.

XIX.

The rustic trains had gather'd round,
And soon the simplest means they found,
By happy thought, and promptest cares,
To save the child of many prayers.
Forth from the flaming dwelling brought,
The father bless'd his happy lot;
Nor mourn'd the loss of all beside,
So well was every wish supplied.
Thus was the youth, of honour'd name,
Reserved to deeds of pious fame;
Nor did his loftiest wish aspire
To ask on earth a title higher
Than this,—"A brand pluck'd from the fire."

XX.

The God of glory lifts his voice,
And hush'd is earth's tumultuous noise;
The cedars bow in homage down,
And trembling shakes proud Lebanon.
The voice of God as thunder breaks
Upon the waters, and he speaks
In tempests, that impetuous roar
From coast to coast, and shore to shore.
Broken and prostrate on the ground
The forest trees lie thick around;
And as an unicorn in flight,
The mountains skip in strange affright.
The voice of God still rising higher,
Divides the flames of lambent fire,
Shakes the wild wilderness afar,
And kindles elemental war.

The voice of God is full of power,
And when he speaks, in that dread hour,
He lays the pride of mountains low,
Or bids the rivers cease to flow;
And wastes remote, by man untrod,
Confess'd the mighty hand of God.
The trembling hind leaps frighted forth,
And gives her young untimely birth;
High o'er the floods as king he sits,
And to his sway the world submits;
This know, and needless fears shall cease,
The Lord shall give his people peace.

LXI.

Thus sang the man of much employ,
And in the song was sacred joy;
And ever as he pass'd abroad,
Saw God in all, and all in God.
Hard by, with osiers belted round,
And shelter'd by a grassy mound,
A silvery lake, serene and fair,
Reposed in tranquil slumbers there.
As some bright mirror, sweetly shone
Its glassy surface in the sun;
So still and calm, no ruffling breeze
Or moved its waves, or shook the trees;
While far around the peaceful scene
Were balmy beauties all serene.
Sweet emblem of a mind at peace,
When passion's stormy surgings cease,
And no distractions rob the breast
Of gentle quietude and rest.
Thus as a lake, serene and deep,
Whose silent waters sweetly sleep,
The mind, forgetful of its woes,
Sinks into undisturb'd repose.

XXII.

Then, by the margin of a wood,
Roll'd on a clear and gentle flood;

O'er which the bending willows hung,
And kiss'd the waves that pass'd along;
'Mid flowery shrubs that love to grow
Where crystal streams serenely flow.
There was no ripple on the wave,
Nor was there ought of motion, save
The slow and equal roll, which show'd
That still the silent waters flow'd.
Broad on the surface of the stream
Refulgent shone the solar beam,
Unruffled by the gentle surge,
Till, on the mountain's utmost verge,
Abrupt and prone, in sparkling foam,
'Mid chafing rocks the currents roam,
Disturb'd and restless, till below
In peace the gather'd waters flow,
Thus reconciled to roll again
In tranquil grandeur through the plain.

XXIII.

His was a well enlighten'd taste,
In all its pleasures pure and chaste.
Yet art and nature, bright and fair,
Were but his secondary care;
His chief delight and dearest joy
Were ever in his blest employ.
The Pastoral Office! it were meet
To own that God appointed it:
And He who gave it by his word,
Will what he gave for ever guard.
The Pastoral Office has its cares,
And he who that distinction shares
Must wave his banner high unfurl'd,
And lead in war against the world.
First in the walks of pious fame
His function has a sacred claim,
And to its offices is given
The sanction of approving heaven.

Paternal it is his to be,
In mild and just authority,
To teach, rebuke, and warn, and guide;
'Tis his to serve, as to preside,
And watch, and act, and walk abroad
As one accountable to God;
Till He who gave the charge shall give
The word that only can relieve.

XXIV.

The man of God's own choice stands forth,
Adorn'd with dignity and worth,
And, in his order and profession,
Is plainly of the true succession!
The Apostles were a faithful race,
Call'd and renew'd by saving grace;
In toils and dangers, full of zeal,
They sought all human griefs to heal;
And all who share what they had shared.
Thus call'd, converted, and prepared
To follow in the path they trod,
And bring the wandering back to God;
These are, and these alone can be,
Successors to their ministry;
And all beside are out of line,
Without the well-attested sign
That ascertains the right divine.

XXV.

The day must come when love's great law
Shall govern all the church below;
And then shall all contentions cease
The flocks of Christ shall rest in peace;
The ruler and the ruled shall then
Be holy and harmonious men;
Nor aught on earth shall meet the eye,
But peace, and love, and amity.
Polemic bitterness no more
Shall vex, as it had vex'd before.

The social elements that form
Society's essential charm,
Shall in congenial concord join,
And make earth's harmony divine.
One faith, one interest, and one Lord,
One equal rule, the written word,
Shall all confess, and this confessing,
Boundless shall be the voice of blessing.
Which in melodious strains shall rise,
A grateful offering to the skies.

XXVI.

Great principles of truth divine,
And doctrines, that stand out and shine
Distinct and clear,—these WESLEY named,
And in their settled rank proclaim'd
The ground of hope he dared to place
Firm on the rock of sovereign grace;
And not on works, however good,
But on that all-atoning blood,
Whose merit must for ever be
Man's first, and last, and only plea.
The guilty cannot be forgiven
But by the clemency of heaven;
And that forgiveness is not known
But by confiding faith alone;
And faith, that may remove the load,
Is equally the gift of God.
Yet he who would that gift receive
Must ask, and asking, still believe.
And in the hour of instant faith
Is pardon known, and threat'ning death
Is done away, and guilt is gone;
Yet not by works that we have done:
'Tis grace, by faith, that sets us free,
And cancels all iniquity;
For God alone restores the lost,
Lest any man should proudly boast.

XXVII.

Thus, justified by faith alone,
The mighty grace to man is known,
By signs infallible and clear;
For God's good Spirit deigns to bear
His happy witness with our own,
That guilt and wrath are past and gone.
Direct upon the conscious soul
Does this attesting witness fall,
And in the heart, its bless'd abode,
Makes known that we are born of God.
Sweet record, when 'tis written there,
Rich is the joy believers share!
The sinner's doom reversed, he stands
With glowing heart and lifted hands;
And thus appealing to the skies,
With filial confidence he cries,
"Hail, Abba, Father! claim thy son,
By grace adopted as thy own."

XXVIII.

This blessing too, by faith received,
What time the conscious soul believed,
Is not delay'd beyond the hour
Of instant faith's availing power.
'Tis present freedom for the slave,
And present willingness to save;
And present love thus shed abroad
Within us, by a present God.
The time is *now*, the word is nigh,
Now bend the knee, and lift the eye;
Heaven wills not longer to delay,
Nor will he put thy prayer away.
All things are ready, grace is free,
And mercy, sinner, is for thee.
Ah! why to come art thou so slow?
Believe, and be forgiven now.
Nor wait till thou art worthy, come
Just as thou art, He calls thee home;

Delay not to obey the call,
But lowly at his footstool fall,
And know that he hath died for all.

XXIX.

But there was one bright truth divine,
Of fair the fairest, placed to shine
In front of others, and above,
In all the light of perfect love.
A *full* salvation wrought within,
From all the stains and power of sin;
The mind of Christ, and image fair
Of his unspotted character.
A heart renew'd, and pure, and clean,
Where he alone is heard and seen;
Where perfect love to man, and God,
Is by the Spirit shed abroad,
And nothing is allow'd to be
But holiness and sanctity.
This is the promise held to view,
And some have felt that promise true.
There is a fountain deep and wide,
'Twas open'd in the Saviour's side,
And flowing thence, the cure of sin,
Can purge defilement from within,
And by its virtues here below,
Thus wash and make us white as snow.

XXX.

These principles composed the tale
That charm'd the tenants of the vale,
What time the early race of yore
Proclaim'd glad tidings to the poor.
The mountains echoed with the voice
That made the vales beneath rejoice;
While to the desert, or the glen,
They pass'd, unpatronised by men.
And yet it was their lot to share
The sufferance of superior care,
For God himself was with them there.

The muse recurs with kind intention,
To names she had but dared to mention,
Nor blushes in her votive strain
At least to mention them again.
Of these her fondness gives a few
Whom well she loved, or well she knew;
Their worth, by all the wise confest,
As those whom God had greatly blest,
Hath made them models of the rest.

XXXI.

Mather, of strong and steadfast mind,
In trial firm, in toil resign'd;
From early times he nobly stood
Among the zealous and the good.
Severe in virtue, strong in faith,
With steady step he trod the path
His sire pursued, and dared defend
The plans of his departed friend;
What time abroad debates arose,
That seem'd not friendly to the cause
He loved so well, and which to guard
He stood a witness for the Lord.
In goodness steadfast as a rock,
His settled mind sustain'd the shock
Of changeful projects, till the storm
Blew over, and produced no harm.
In effort great, in counsel sage,
Brave in his youth, and meek in age,
All times to come shall place his name
High in the rolls of pious fame.

XXXII.

And Pawson, deep experienced he
In pure and vital piety.
The work of grace within the heart
He knew, and therefore could impart
The knowledge of the Spirit's course,
While working with a mystic force,

To change or cleanse the seeking soul,
Or make the contrite spirit whole.
Conversant with the things of God,
The way of faith he understood,
And was by wisdom skill'd to win
The heedless from the paths of sin;
And, having won them, lived to guard
The well-trained children of the Lord;
Till late released, to him 'twas given,
To gain a great reward in heaven.

XXXIII.

And WOOD, of meek and manly name,
Surviving long, remain'd the same,
In whom the youthful may descry
The relic of an age gone by.
A son of consolation he,
The prop of timid piety;
The gentle soother of the sad,
He often made the mournful glad.
Himself serene, his tranquil air
Rebuked the terrors of despair,
And bore desponding spirits up
On gentle wings of faith and hope.
Surviving long his youthful fire
He seem'd unwilling to retire,
Till by the weight of years opprest
At length he sought repose and rest;
Revered and loved, his name shall be
Transferr'd to all posterity.

XXXIV.

And BRADBURN, honour'd in his day
For gifts which but the great display.
He was a man of passions strong,
Of generous heart, and flowing tongue.
The child of not unworthy fame,
Perchance incautious, which to blame
Were due to truth, yet liberal he.
Almost to prodigality.

Yet steadfast in the trying hour,
When proffer'd wealth had tempting power,
He had the virtue to disdain
The sordid hopes of worldly gain,
And with the people of his choice,
Resolved to suffer or rejoice;
With these alone he dared decide
To live, and with them too he died.

XXXV.

And BENSON, who that ever heard him,
But for his piety revered him?
And for his learning as a teacher,
And for his talents as a preacher,
Who has not seen him nobly shine
In all that makes a sound divine?
He was a man of various worth,
That shone in spotless lustre forth;
His works of piety and learning
(Most valued by the most discerning)
Will long remain, and hand him down
With lasting honour and renown
To other times, whose sons shall share
The fruits of his devoted care;
Shall read his page, and life, content
In these to own, as they are meant,
His fair and lasting monument.

XXXVI.

Bright be the place of thy abode,
Distinguish'd servant of thy God,
And of his course, and of mankind,
Bright as the lustre of thy mind,
That threw itself in strength abroad
O'er all the works and ways of God!
Immortal CLARKE, mankind to thee
Awards this immortality.
And the high will of heaven's great Lord
In all confirms the just award.

Enrich'd with universal lore,
Great were thy gifts, and great thy store.
Collected from the tomes of ages,
Whate'er was taught by saints or sages,
Of men, or things, or truths divine,
Industrious zeal had render'd thine.
Of kindly heart, and vigorous thought,
And zeal for God that falter'd not;
The church, the nation, and thy race,
Thy name shall with the noble place;
And thousands thou hast bless'd, shall be
Thy joy through all eternity.

XXXVII.

Would you desire to see and know
What grace can do for men below;
Then visit BARBER's peaceful grave,
For he was great, and just, and brave;
By conquering grace to God subdued,
And by that conquering grace renew'd,
The lion soon became a lamb,
The rude and fierce grew meek and tame;
And mercy raised his vigorous mind
Above the level of its kind.
Grace gave him all his moral might,
And made his Christian armour bright.
Should he in stranger's eyes appear
As if unbending, or severe;
Yet better known, his heart would prove
The seat of kindliness and love;
But when sustain'd by truth alone,
Not all the world could put him down.

XXXVIII.

And GRIFFITH, not unknown to fame,
Through life he bore an honour'd name,
And with the faithful and the good,
As one of them acknowledged stood.
To order he had just respect,
Nor would in discipline neglect

E'en little things, as some esteem,
But held not little things by him.
In social life, and public care,
It was his happiness to share
A pleasing grace, that won regard,
And drew all wishes to the Lord;
Whom well he served, till late release
Closed up his bright career in peace.

XXXIX.

And there were three, of early fame,
Of kindred heart, and kindred claim,
To stand, as they distinguish'd stood
Among the meek, and wise, and good.
MURLIN, of tender heart and true,
Took feeling part among the few
Who wept the woes of dying men;
A "weeping Prophet" he, as when
The seer of Judah, full of cares,
Gave sad expression to his fears
In heavy sighs, and gushing tears.
And BARDSLEY, happy instance he
Of undisguised simplicity,
And humble love, and true regard
To all the interests of his Lord.
Meek and sincere, a man of peace,
His presence made contentions cease;
With gentle smile, and artless zeal,
'Twas his to comfort and to heal.
And when perchance debates ran high,
"Now let us pray," was his reply.
And all was tranquil instantly.
And BRAMWELL, ever strong in faith,
Who seem'd to pray in every breath,
And, with a power above his own,
To bring an instant blessing down.
His spirit-stirring ardours glow'd
In love to man, and zeal for God.

Bold in all good, revivals were
Not seldom granted to his prayer.
And still he thought to live and love,
Till, suddenly, a glad remove
It was his honour to receive,
"And cease at once to work and live."

XL.

And WATSON! but to speak of him,
Even fondness falters, and esteem
Confesses, that to make him known
Demands a genius like his own.
With taste and talents bright and fair,
And manly virtues great and rare,
'Twas his to charm the list'ning throng,
That hung enraptured on his tongue,
And bear the grov'lling thought above,
To fairer realms of light and love.
Sweet was the music of his lyre,
That might the dullest mind inspire;
And when he spake, around him glow'd
The glories of the living God.
By great conceptions, bright and bold,
He fringed his clouds with glittering gold;
Yet bade them, well surcharged with rain,
Drop down in fatness on the plain.
With happy skill he dared to chase
Oppression from the Negro race.
Then, with a well-adapted tongue,
He held sweet "Converse" with the young.
Gave "Institutes" to hold dominion
O'er all the walks of wild opinion;
And "Expositions" well begun;
But here, alas! his noon-day sun
Too early set, for all but him;
Who, bowing to the will supreme,
Contented pass'd from shades beneath,
Beyond the walks of sin and death.

Out in unclouded sunshine fair,
Where all the just, made perfect, are
To live and reign for ever there.

XLI.

But time would fail, and labour faint,
To give the name of every saint
Whose virtues, toils, and public worth,
Have shone with noble lustre forth.
They were confess'd in deed and word,
A veteran army of the Lord.
Nor carnal weapons wielded they,
Their strength in lowly weakness lay;
And in the love and guardian care
Of Him who arm'd them for the war.
They bore a banner wide unfurl'd,
Inscribed with "Peace to all the world."
And oft with more than mortal might.
They put an alien host to flight;
Subdued the kingdoms of their foes,
Wrought righteousness where crimes oppose.
By promise cheer'd, they dared engage
To stop the lion's threatening rage;
To quench the violence of fire,
And waxing warm with great desire,
Grew valiant for their faithful Lord:
Escaping oft the threatening sword,
Invincible in faith they stood
Among the brave, and wise, and good;
A warrior-race, adorn'd with scars,
As heroes wounded in the wars.

XLII.

And they were made content to bear
The chilling blasts of desert air;
And cruel mockings, scourges, shame,
And vile reproach for Jesu's name;
And dismal dungeons, pelting storms,
And pain, and grief, of direful forms.

In caves or dens consign'd to dwell,
Yet patient, they sustain'd it well;
And not accepting to be free,
If truth must buy their liberty.
These bore distress of every sort,
And, having gain'd a good report,
Though little in the world's esteem,
The world was never worthy them;
And God, their Maker and their King,
For them prepared some better thing,
Than earth could give; and thus, by faith
Made victors over sin and death,
They pass'd, as sharers with their Lord,
To claim above their great reward,
And wear the crown so freely given,
And close their long career in heaven.

XLIII.

Come to the camp, ye well-prepared,
And share the toils your fathers shared:
With equal steps their course pursue,
The war will furnish work for you.
Come to the camp, take rank with those
Who still pursue their routed foes,
And share the toil, that you may be
Partakers of the victory.
Come to the camp in armour bright,
With alien hosts prepared to fight;
Till sin recedes, and sorrows cease,
And all the earth is fill'd with peace.
As some bright angel through the skies,
Sweet mercy, fraught with blessings, flies,
And bending on her starry wings,
Proclaims a better state of things:
The darkness of the earth shall fly,
Before the splendours of the sky;
The errors that enslave the mind,
The follies that pollute mankind,

And curse the earth, shall pass away,
As clouds before the light of day;
Till morning breaking from above
Shall all the gloom of sin remove,
Disperse the shades of ancient night,
And bless the earth with boundless light.

XLIV.

For such a work, say, can there be
Who ask some fair apology?
Take all demanded,—it is found
In sinners perishing around;
And in the value of the soul,
And in the danger threat'ning all,
And in the high command of Heaven,
And in a Saviour freely given;
And in the darkness of the mind,
And in the woes of all mankind,
And in the wants of all our race,
And in the power of saving grace,
And in the prevalence of crimes,
And in the errors of the times,
And in the tears of sorrow's sons,
And in the depth of dying groans,
And in the captive's sighs to be
From his oppressive bondage free;
And in the hopeless woes that reign
In hell's dark holds of deathless pain;
And in the ransom paid for all,
And in the Gospel's glorious call;
And in the endless joys of heaven,
That shall be to the faithful given;
And in the pleasure it supplies
To guide the erring to the skies;
And in the hope that faith may own,
To hear at last the word, "Well done!"
Take these, though but in part, to show
Just cause for all these toils below;

Take these, and in their value see
How more than competent they be
To form a fair apology.

XLV.

The sweetest scenes that bloom beneath
Are yet the haunts of sin and death;
And where earth's richest beauties smile
There man is most perverse and vile.
Where nature wears her loveliest dress,
There man appears in nakedness.
Thy balmy forests, bright Ceylon,
Have nothing mean but man alone.
Thy fertile regions, India fair,
Abound with blessings everywhere;
And nought is barren but the soul
Of man, whose errors wither all.
Here rolls the idol's ponderous car,
And funeral piles are kindled there.
Remote, the bleeding pilgrim pines,
And near, the widow life resigns;
Self-tortured now, and now rejected,
The victim bleeds, or dies neglected.
The cannibal, with cruel haste,
Disgusting eats his human feast;
And then, besotted, dark, and rude,
Destruction thins the multitude;
The infant struggling from the womb,
But breathes, and sinks into the tomb.
And thus the fairest scenes beneath
Are but the haunts of sin and death.

XLVI.

Say, ye who view with tearful eye,
These walks of widening misery,
Are these dire evils, and this grief
Too mighty to admit relief?
Has Heaven consign'd a fallen race
To unrelenting wretchedness?

And are there none whose pity may
Drive hell's fierce demon from his prey?
Answer, thou book of blessing, where
Are words of mercy written fair.
And Thou, in whom the frail confide,
Thy grace hath previously replied;
And ye who know religion's worth,
And mourn the ills that waste the earth;
And own the high commission given,
Stamp'd with authority from heaven;
Say, is the groaning world to be
The sport of hopeless misery?
The world attends, with wishful eye,
And utters forth a doleful cry,
Demanding what is your reply?

XLVII.

Hear, conscious Heaven, and deign to own
Our pledged allegiance to thy throne;
Give but thy grace with the command,
And shield us with thy mighty hand:
And where entrench'd, the guarded foe
Surrounds his holds with shrieks of woe,
Thy shielded heralds shall repair,
And brave the danger frowning there.
Gird on thy sword, most mighty Thou,
And lead us where we long to go;
And led by thee, o'er land or main,
Alike inured to toil and pain;
Though weeping we may issue forth
To reap the harvest of the earth;
Yet, doubtless, from our blest employ
We shall return again with joy.
In such a service, so divine,
At nothing shall our heart repine.
Without the joys thy smiles can give
It is not really life to live;
And with the hope thy smiles supply,
It is not really death to die.

XLVIII.

Lord, lift thy people's wishes up,
And cheer thy church with glorious hope;
Then shall the desert blossom fair,
And fruits of Paradise be there.
Where nature's brightest things abound,
Shall other charms than these be found.
The murky brood of ancient crimes,
And all the ills of other times,
As chaff before the desert wind,
Shall fly, nor leave a wreck behind.
Meekness and mercy, all divine,
Shall with beguiling lustre shine,
And peace and love, of heavenly birth,
Shall bless the tranquil realms of earth.
Brought from afar, and nursed by thee,
Thou shalt thy sons and daughters see
In stainless bands about thy throne,
The offspring of thy grace alone;
Made meet to grace thy courts above,
With songs of praise, and joy, and love.

XLIX.

Haste, day of happiness, decreed,
When all the earth, from bondage freed,
Shall with unbounded gladness sing
Thy conquests, universal King!
Then shall this song be heard afar,
The kingdoms and the nations are
Become the Lord's; and he shall reign,
And all his sovereign rights maintain,
Till the wide world, from pole to pole,
Shall own him equal Lord of all;
From age to age, and shore to shore,
For ever, and for ever more.

BOOK THE FOURTH.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE opening morning illustrative of the rise of Methodism—gratifying anticipations of prophecy—apostrophe to departed years—a cursory view of—the previous state of the nation—the first Methodists at Oxford—various opinions about them—oppositions—firmness—preaching in the open air—labours and successes—the spirit of the sire resting on his sons—the prosperity of the cause—passing from weakness to strength—the cause had an aggressive bearing—the early triumphs of Christianity—pleasing remembrances—the chapels of early times—the fathers of the connexion—races of after-times—institutions—missions—their extent—youthful education—schools for Preachers' sons—the Theological Institution—the case of worn-out Preachers—the widows—the Strangers' Friend Society—a revival—its progress and results—this not the only way of increase—a reference to subjects and events of past years—the termination of slavery—political debates—Popery—a project to stop itinerancy—Church government—wars of opinion—national education—demise of British princes—religion the same—the powerlessness of philosophy and taste—a great work yet to be done—the connexional movement—the good thence to be expected—prophecy—the Scriptures—gladdening anticipations—the whole concluding with a general song of praise.

BOOK THE FOURTH.

I.

As when the rosy morning dawns,
Gilding afar the dewy lawns
With liquid pearl, of ruby glow,
That sparkling decks the vales below
In gemmy lustre, sweet and gay
As that which marks the milky way;
So o'er the moral scenes around
New charms of brighter name abound;
And where deformity and sin
Appear'd without, or reign'd within,
And vices, miseries, and crimes,
Had mark'd the ills of other times,
New virtues, of celestial birth,
Adorn the happier scenes of earth;
And offer to the wandering view
Old things mysteriously made new.

II.

The Lord shall reign from shore to shore,
The Lord shall reign for evermore;
And bright events, of happy name,
Already his approach proclaim.
The waiting earth, with upward eye,
Expects his coming from the sky;
Nor shall the force of hell delay
The date of his unbounded sway.
Lo! a new era shall arise,
Foretold by ancient prophecies;
Expected by the nations long,
Express'd in every sacred song;

Thus with predictive truth expressing
The near approach of boundless blessing.
Lo! a new era, passing forth,
Sends its precursors through the earth;
And clearer light, and sweeter peace,
And purer love and righteousness,
Shall on the realms of nature shine,
And bring an age of bliss divine.
Lo! a new era thus arrives,
The slumbering church at length revives;
The feeble and the sad, at length,
Arise, and put on joy and strength;
And pining sorrow sweetly sings,
And heavenly truth triumphant brings
A new and brighter state of things.

III.

Shades of departed years! to you
Memorials of regard are due.
Within your changing rounds arose
A state of things that shall not close
Till days, and months, and years are o'er,
And time and change shall be no more.
Shades of departed years! again
Send back from your remote domain
The hours of zeal and sweet delight,
That bless'd the day, or cheer'd the night,
What time the friendly heavens shed forth
Their mystic influence o'er the earth,
And healing virtues, vast and free,
Restored the reign of piety.
Departed years! of God's right hand,
Whose moral wonders bless'd the land
With light of truth, too long confined,
And hidden from the public mind,
Declare the cause, the means declare,
That gave a favour'd realm to share
A boon so bless'd.—Who led the way?
And what gave truth a wider sway?

Shades of the past! at large retrace
The story of this wond'rous grace,
And how the great event took place.

IV.

A moral gloom that might be felt,
A gloom of ignorance and guilt,
Had o'er the realm of Britain spread;
Till pitying grace awoke, and said,
To scatter this pervading night,
"Let there arise reviving light."
And then reviving light arose,
Fair scenes of beauty to disclose;
What time the man of God's own choice
Pass'd forth, as with a warning voice,
Amid the wond'ring crowd to stand
With gentle heart, and generous hand,
The erring and the vile to win
From peril, misery, and sin.

V.

From stately halls of learned lore,
Where many a sage had sat before,
A little band of ardent youth,
Well-taught in all essential truth,
Led forth, to publish far and wide
The Gospel of the Crucified;
And call a long neglected nation
To seek and share the great salvation.
The nation heard and saw their zeal,
And many a heart began to feel;
And many a slave, from fetters freed,
Rose into liberty indeed.
The dead in sin, to life restored,
Gave thanks and glory to their Lord,
Whose power had pierced the harden'd soul,
Or made the wounded sinner whole.
As when from ocean to the sky
A little cloud ascended high,

And spreading round the ethereal plain,
Surcharged with stores of fruitful rain,
Fell in refreshing showers around,
To water all the parched ground.

VI.

Some stood, as for a while to gaze,
Astounded, and in strange amaze;
The sight was new, and doubtful pride
A moment linger'd to decide,
Or if to bless it, or deride.
The claimants of exclusive right,
At once pronounced upon the sight.
Some frown'd, and others seem'd to pause,
As to explore the mystic cause
Of moral prodigies surprising;
As some new state of things were rising,
That seem'd no friendly cast to bear
On things existing as they were.
Then bold a deadly demon stood,
The grief and terror of the good,
Malignant envy,—he aloud
Drew to his aid the noisy crowd;
And led the fierce and erring throng,
To deeds of violence and wrong.

VII.

Yet firm and fearless in the hour
Of lawless passion's wildest power,
The man of meek and steadfast mind,
To hardship, toil, and shame resign'd,
Opposed to rage a spotless life,
And calmness, to insulting strife.
He met the curses of the vile
With now a sigh, and now a smile.
Then stormy slander ceased to roar,
And useless rage opposed no more;
Save when, in under-tones of hate,
The mob, or erring Magistrate,

Seem'd as unwilling to forego
The fame of conquering such a foe;
Till shame, at length, and frailty blended,
Their powerless interdicts suspended,
As though the' inglorious war had ended.

VIII.

Meantime, beneath some spreading tree,
Or in some rocky shade, we see
The rustic multitude repair,
To weep, and seek redemption there.
Strange sight! in such a scene as this,
A spirit-stirring charm there is,
That gives a class of feelings birth,
Partaking more of heaven than earth.
Behold the herald of the sky,
He lifts his voice of warning high.
That voice the trembling sinner hears,
And sinks the victim of his fears;
Then rises from the reeking sod,
A sinner reconciled to God.
This great and sudden change implies
A power descending from the skies;
Nor all the force of potent speech,
Nor all that eloquence may teach,
Nor charm nor spell, nor calm nor storm,
Could work this manifest reform;
The work is God's, and well we deem
So great a work as worthy him.

IX.

With wishes warm and unconfined,
The man of all-comprising mind
His course pursued, from east to west,
With zeal that would not let him rest.
And as he pass'd, where'er he came,
He publish'd the Redeemer's name;
And scatter'd precious seed abroad,
That, springing up, brought fruit to God.

And then, as to defeat his cares,
The foe went forth to scatter tares.
Defections trampled on the field,
To mar the produce it might yield;
And with pernicious rage to spoil
The fairest plants that bless'd the soil.
Yet watchful heaven, with timely care,
Bade kindly clouds drop fatness there;
And thus the enemy defeated,
In deep vexation oft retreated;
And still the toilsome labourer saw
The hopeful harvest richly grow,
And wave its toil-rewarding store
From field to field, and shore to shore.

X.

Succeeding years roll'd on to bless
His pious cares with large success;
And ere he closed his eyes in death,
Or left the scene of toil beneath,
Twas his around the realm to see
The pleasing spread of piety;
And mark his happy flocks among
The thousands he had fed so long.
At length he closed his bright career,
To truth and to religion dear;
And having reap'd a rich reward,
Pass'd to the bosom of his Lord.
The mournful trains that yet remain'd,
Their loss submissively sustain'd,
And vow'd to follow and complete
A course so fair, a work so great.
As when from Carmel's radiant top
The Hebrew seer ascended up,
But cast his mantle back,—so now
The mystic mantle fell below,
And the blest spirit of their sire
Did his devoted sons inspire.

In manly worth and moral sway,
These were the giants of their day;
Pledged and prepared to glorious war,
They led their conquering course afar;
While some at home, and some abroad,
Urged on the growing cause of God,
Which ever, as it spread and grew,
The labourers with delight might view,
And give the praise to whom 'twas due.

XI.

Behold the scene, how bright and fair
Its still unfolding blessings are!
The groping blind have gain'd their sight,
And walk abroad in heavenly light.
The slave, from galling fetters free,
Has pass'd to glorious liberty.
And vice and crime, as clouds that lower
Portentous o'er the gloomy hour,
Have fled on error's flapping wings,
And left a state of brighter things.
And now abroad on Britain's isle,
The sun-lit hills of Zion smile,
And beauty decks what once was vile.

XII.

Not from the walks of wealth and fame,
Did God his chosen servants claim;
But men of meek and mighty mind,
To toil inured, and pain resign'd;
Of upright heart, and ardent soul,
Made conscious of a heavenly call,—
These to all meaner motives dead,
Light on a darken'd land to shed,
Now sought the dwellings of the poor,
Which none had ever sought before.
Forgotten and neglected long,
The heedless and deluded throng,
Amid their walks remote and wild,
Grew to strange tidings reconciled;

Till hearts surcharged with guilty fears,
And eyes suffused with contrite tears,
Gave gracious witness, loud and clear,
That God in saving power was near.

XIII.

This is a work of wond'rous form,
A work of many a heavenly charm,
That bears upon its front abroad
The impress of a present God.
This is a work of deep surprise,
And well indeed may mortal eyes
Inquiring gaze, nor yet descry
The finger of the Lord most high.
The living, they have known its worth,
And walk'd in happy freedom forth ;
And the more numerous dead have known
And call'd its richest joys their own.
This is thy work, Almighty Lord,
The work of thy all-powerful word;
A work that is, and still shall be,
Worthy of thine, and worthy thee !

XIV.

Survey the past, and meekly scan
This counsel of regard to man ;
Nor let the haughtiness of pride
Its strange simplicity deride;
Or sagely prophesy that all
Must from its obvious weakness fall.
This had indeed been often said,
Yet always with a secret dread,
That things reputed weak and frail,
Might yet grow mighty and prevail.
For all was absent that could prop
The structure of a worldly hope;
But all was present that could show
The power of God display'd below.
What though no splendid talents shone,
Such as an erring taste might own,

And every arm of flesh appear'd
As if in hostile menace rear'd;
Yet arm'd in mail of artless worth,
The soldiers of the cross went forth
Against the foes of human kind,
Against the tyrants of the mind,
Against the dungeon and the stake,
Against reproach for Jesu's sake,
Against the malice of the proud,
Against the clamours of the crowd,
Against the policy of courts,
Against a world of ill reports,
Against the reign of deadly crimes,
Against the errors of the times;
Yet so against them as to win
Their interest from the side of sin;
And so against them as to prove
Victorious by the force of love.

XV.

Thus when at first from Salem's gates,
The word went out to all her states,
And pass'd in its expansive route
Through all the regions round about;
Then to the seat of Cæsar's sway
The Gospel found its rapid way;
Till o'er his palaces of pride
The banner of the Crucified
With crimson folds, amid the air,
Was seen in triumph waving there.
Then Roman eagles crouch'd to own
The glory of the Holy One;
Then Rome conceded richer fame
Than all her warlike hosts might claim,
To Him who bade her battles cease,
And bless'd her spacious realms with peace.

XVI.

If it be pleasant thus to cast
A backward glance upon the past,

Retrace the steps our fathers trod,
And mark their faith and zeal for God:
It is not less so to survey
The glories of the present day.
Long time the nation gazed to see
New things in immaturity;
But now the embryo cause hath grown
To greatness, which the earth must own,
And to a state of comely form,
Which wore not always such a charm.
By friends or foes, or false or true,
It has been seen in every view;
Tested and tried, caress'd and spurn'd,
With shame oppress'd, or grace adorn'd;
In times of peace and of commotion,
In vile neglect or high promotion;
In cots, or palaces, or courts,
Where pomp or poverty resorts,
When view'd as with malicious eyes,
Or when with kindly sympathies.
Thus seen of all, in every shade,
By some admired, by some betray'd;
So often view'd, no feature new
Remains to court a closer view;
The whole display'd, beyond debate,
Stands open wide to love or hate,
According to its present state.

XVII.

The temples of the olden days,
Which humble views essay'd to raise,
Were structures of but lowly name,
Unwritten in the rolls of fame,
And unobserved in passing by,
Save by some friend's instructed eye.
No stately pillars deck'd the dome,
No grandeur shed a solemn gloom,
But, plain and simple, they withal
Were for the assembly far too small;

And yet though little in dimensions,
Large were the builder's kind intentions.
Yet not to be of men admired,
From public view they oft retired
To worship, where offensive noise
Might not disturb their social joys.
But now the small, obscure, and few,
Have been replaced by large and new.
Yet all are poor as the abode
Of the dread majesty of God;
And mean the brightest men may raise
For his acknowledged dwelling-place,
Whose courts to tread, and grace to know,
Are all of heaven allowed below.

XVIII.

The fathers of the present race,
First call'd to preach the word of grace,
Were men of God, and true of heart,
By God's good Spirit set apart,
To publish, at his sovereign word,
The grace and doctrines of the Lord.
They were distinguish'd from above
By all the charms of heavenly love;
Through all the land, as orbs of light,
They shone with lustre ever bright.
A band of brothers, well united,
Who in their noble work delighted;
Models of ministerial zeal,
Their Master's cause they loved full well:
Men whom no tempting bribe might buy
From bold and patient industry;
With talents fitted for their toil,
Alike above or frown or smile,
They were an order own'd of God,
And call'd to spread his truth abroad;
And what they were in zeal and skill,
But God sustain'd,—they are so still.

XIX.

The races that may yet arise
Shall look with pleasure and surprise
On early toils, and those who bore them,
In olden times which were before them;
And hence collect, while back they cast
A wondering glance upon the past,
The means by which the fathers won
The things that now are all their own.
Races of after times! to you
The counsels of your sires are due;
On you devolves the solemn trust
To keep, as keep you ever must,
The interests of a cause, transferr'd
From hands that can no longer guard.
Races to come! though yet unborn,
'Tis yours these doctrines to adorn;
That gave your sires the means to bless
An erring world with truth and peace.
That truth preserve, that peace extend,
Nor from your high position bend;
But hand the truth unalter'd down;
To ages far beyond your own.

XX.

The missions! how divinely fair
Their far unfolding prospects are!
Though small and few when they began
The word went forth, and swiftly ran
From realm to realm, and shore to shore,
With glad success, unknown before.
A voice, as deep-toned thunder, came
From lands remote, as if to blame
The tardy movements of the saints,
To soothe or heal the sad complaints
Of countless millions, sunk in sin,
And in their bondage perishing.
That forceful voice, though late, was heard,
The brave for bright exploits prepared;

The greatly good, and nobly wise,
Touch'd with resistless sympathies,
Renounced the pleasing scenes of home,
O'er seas, and foreign climes to roam,
And bear the great salvation given
To every nation under heaven.
The Heathen heard, nor heard in vain;
Freed from oppression's heavy chain,
Full many bless'd the joyful day,
And cast their idol gods away;
And bowed with meekness to adore
A God they had not known before.

XXI.

Through Afric's wilds the joyful sound
Hath cheer'd her list'ning tribes around;
A sound, which only could repair
The wrongs so long inflicted there.
Through India's densely teeming plains
Have sounded forth the heavenly strains,
Whose mystic charm hath quench'd the fire
That flamed on many a funeral pyre.
Through the bright isles of glittering seas,
Fann'd by the ever-fragrant breeze;
Through groups that stud the southern main,
Or where the negro tribes complain;
Through Europe's walks of arts and arms,
Or plains disturb'd by war's alarms,
Or scenes of rural quiet fair,
The messengers of grace are there;
And round them lowly temples rise,
And grateful songs salute the skies.
The moral wastes of dreary woes
Now bud and blossom as the rose;
And where these gems of virtue shine,
The world shall own them as a sign
Of wond'rous grace, and power divine.

XXII.

Should after-times see education
Adopted by the total nation.
And schools of knowledge rise, though late,
Beneath the sanction of the State;
It might afford the' inquiring mind
A lesson of delight, to find
How, and by whom, the noble plan
Its bright career of good began.
Past history, in her faithful pages,
Shows the neglect of early ages,
And hands their ignorance and crimes
Down to the light of latter times.
The Sabbath system still is young,
Yet is that system wise and strong,
And worthy of the zeal that gave it,
And fitted to the poor who have it.
It were a soul-refreshing sight,
A scene to give the good delight,
To view the thousands that repair
To these retreats, and gather there,
As from a tree of knowledge given,
Fruits that have happy taste of heaven.
Long may that tree divinely grow,
Yielding rich fruit to all below;
Whose very leaves may heal the nations,
And bless all future generations.

XXIII.

Nor this alone, though good and free
These scenes of fair instruction be;
The prophets' sons! these too shall share
A portion of the public care.
And while their sires, with patient zeal,
Attend upon the public weal,
Relieved from cares that might restrain,
Or call their wishes back again,
Content they pass to meet their lot,
And at their labours murmur not.

Full many a star of hopeful light,
From thence hath cheer'd the gloom of night;
And well rewarded public care,
By talents bright, and virtues rare.
Perchance the sire hath seen his son
Wear honours brighter than his own;
And thus the youth, grown up to man,
Makes perfect what the sire began.

XXIV.

The rising ministry demands
The training of judicious hands.
The men of other times gone by
Were greatly favour'd from on high,
With various gifts, from thence received,
Fit for the times in which they lived.
But public taste, and learning too,
Have gone abroad, and still will go;
And he who would at all improve them
Should stand a step or two above them:
For knowledge marching in advance
Is never to be pass'd by chance;
And he who would to worth allure it
Must keep a-head, and go before it.
Nor may the church expect from this
More than its plain pretension is.
A seraph's tongue, an angel's mind,
A taste from every stain refined,
A bright and fine imagination,
A manner full of fascination,
A prodigy of mental force,
Without a fault, were more, of course,
Than may be either hoped or given,
From any training under heaven.

XXV.

But it were safe to hope from hence
Fair forms of sound and cultured sense;
And men who, if occasion rose,
Might guard the truth from all its foes;

And sound in speech, in doctrine sound,
Prepared to stand on truth's high ground,
That need not be ashamed to own
The cause that pride would trample down.
In courts of kings, if summon'd there,
With modest courage to declare
Their Saviour's claims, with such a zeal
As but the well-instructed feel;
Such as his banner once unfurl'd,
And waved it o'er a wond'ring world.

XXVI.

Behold the man of many years,
Worn down by lengthen'd toils and cares;
He has a claim, which all concede,
To kind support in time of need.
The hardships of his early life,
'Midst private cares, and public strife;
His firmness in the trying hour,
His youthful zeal, and moral power,
His hoary hairs, and spotless fame,
These constitute his rightful claim.
What though his faltering tongue no more
May urge the cause he urged before;
What though his tott'ring limbs refuse
Their wonted strength, and previous use;
What though a dimness shades the eye
That sparkled once so vividly;
The Minister of God, by whom
Thousands have to the Saviour come;
Is he in age, and pain extreme,
In his last hours himself to deem
Forsaken, and by men pass'd by,
Who stood so long, and stood so high?
He, as a hero from the war,
Bearing full many a glorious scar;
The victor of a thousand fights,
And still, though frail, his soul delights

O'er previous fields of toil to run,
And show how battles had been won.
Shall he, beneath a weight of years,
Sink, unsupported in his cares?
The voice of mere humanity
Replies aloud, That must not be;
And all we feel, or think, or know,
Compels the heart to answer, No!

XXVII.

Lives there a man of woman born,
So dead to all that may adorn
The name he bears, as not to feel
The woes that sympathy would heal?
What heart that hears the widow's wail,
What ear that listens to her tale,
But to the throbbings of her grief
Would fain administer relief?
For the loved sharer of her joy
Well-pleased did she her cares employ;
He was her hope, her earthly stay,
Her comfort through life's devious way.
His zeal was warm, his toils severe,
Nor toil nor danger did he fear.
Yet soon he sunk beneath his load,
And pass'd from earth to live with God.
The widow'd mother felt the shock,
And weeping o'er her infant flock,
The hand of God her heart confest,
In whom the fatherless are blest.
And shall the widow and her train
In sorrow and neglect complain?
Forbid it pity, kindness, love,
And all below and all above.
Shall not her sorrows find redress,
And gentle mercy soothe distress?
Yes!—all that's noble answers,—Yes!

XXVIII.

The Stranger's Friend! delightful name,
Sacred beyond heroic fame;
So full of tenderness and love,
That it is claim'd by God above;
Who deigns so far to condescend
As to become the stranger's Friend.
What numbers, to the world unknown,
Beneath a load of sorrow groan.
In dark retreats, and joyless cells,
The child of deep affliction dwells,
Robeless or ragged, with no bed
On which to lay the sinking head;
Nor food to cherish sinking nature,
Nor kindly care of human creature.
Such are the scenes assign'd to thee,
Thou blessing, bless'd Society!
Thy walks are where the wretched sigh,
Or pining want retires to die;
Where the big tear, or bursting groan,
Invite thy sympathies alone.

XXIX.

Go to the house of mourning, go,
And still the cries of hopeless woe;
Pass to the sufferer's dark abode,
And lighten his oppressive load;
And claim support as thou dost claim
The honours of a noble name.
Invoke the favour of the skies
To send thee competent supplies.
The eye that sees thee shall confess thee,
The stranger's grateful heart shall bless thee;
As the result of thy employ,
The widow's heart shall dance for joy:
And He who doth thy toils regard,
Thy Patron, Advocate, and Lord,
Shall crown thee with a rich reward.

XXX.

There have been seasons, when by Heaven
New impulse to the word was given,
When, with a more resistless force,
Prevailing truth pursued its course,
And with an unobstructed sway
Bore all opposing things away.
It was as when the teeming skies
Rain on the earth in rich supplies;
As when the floods from mountains fall,
And winding through the valleys roll;
As when abroad the fresh'ning breeze
Ruffles the stream, or shakes the trees;
Nor seem'd there in the great event
Much use of human instrument;
As though the Lord had will'd to show
That all the good achieved below
Was of himself,—that man might own
The hand divine, thus clearly shown,
As working what it will alone.

XXXI.

There had been warm desires express'd,
And fervent prayers to Heaven address'd;
And some of every state and station
Were full of high-raised expectation.
Some felt as if the grace were near,
And waited till it should appear:
Nor He who gave this strong desire,
Did long delay the heavenly fire.
At first a feeling, deep and strong,
Moved through the vast assembled throng;
And then a power, beyond control,
Seized on full many a trembling soul.
The feeling first express'd in sighs,
Grew into loud and bitter cries;
Then follow'd groans that told of fears,
And then a flood of gushing tears;

And then a mingled sound arose,
From these of joy, of sorrow those.
Some sang aloud of pard'ning grace,
While heaven seem'd beaming on their face.
Yet others struggling still remain'd
As by some mystic fetter chain'd,
Till now that chain was strangely broken,
And the freed soul found happy token
Of peace and love, that seem'd to swell
To tides of joy unspeakable.
The Lord was there, in potent sway,
And gave its glory to the day
Of great events, by him achieved,
When a large multitude believed,
And each a pledge of heaven received.

XXXII.

Yet 'tis not always in the storm
That God will his own work perform.
The small still voice has equal power
To work in his appointed hour;
Nor may the will of mortals choose,
Or this adopt, or that refuse.
God works his will in various ways,
And each has equal claims to praise.
The church has periods of repose,
By mercy screen'd from all her foes;
And other anxious times there are,
When fearful perils threaten her.
There are no waves that ever roll,
But God can, as he will, control;
No tempest ever yet arose,
But he could hush it to repose;
There is no foe that may alarm,
But he can instantly disarm.
So great his power, so vast his sway,
He can in storm or calm display
A sovereign skill, and sovereign might,
To guide his church, and guard his right.

XXXIII.

Grave questions had, in grave debate,
Engaged the cares of Church and State ;
And many were the wise suggestions
Of public men on all these questions.
And first of SLAVERY.—This evil
Some boldly held was of the devil ;
And that it well became the nation
To show its utter detestation
Of such a traffic, and to say
"It must, it shall be, done away!"
The principle was just, and yet
There were who linger'd to admit
Its justice, and its need denied.
To which the public will replied,
"The thing is altogether wrong,
And tearful eyes have wept it long :
Beneath its load the Negro sighs,
He pines, appeals to heaven, and dies."
The voice of pity spake at length,
And in that voice was saving strength ;
A blot so foul no more shall stain
The honours of a noble reign.
Thus spake the nation, and her voice
Made hearts long pain'd with grief, rejoice :
Consenting Heaven, with high decree,
Then bade the Negro race be free ;
And then, exalted into man,
The bounding captive leap'd and ran
With freedom never felt before,
And chains and bondage were no more.

XXXIV.

And then the interests of the State
Grew into warm and wild debate ;
And parties rose, and parties fell,
And politicians reason'd well
Of rights, and liberty, and law,
And strangely wish'd to make us know

What blessings would in the conclusion
Attend upon a revolution.
Then the political fanatic
Avow'd opinions democratic;
French politics, still red with slaughter,
Waited for wind to cross the water;
And would have cross'd it, but, alas!
The British lion kept the pass;
And, frowning from the cliffs of Dover,
Forbade the mischief to come over,
And scared away, with dreadful roar,
The crows of carrion from the shore.
Then late the terrors of the storm,
That fill'd the nation with alarm,
Subsided, and at Heaven's command
Sweet peace revisited the land.
And warriors, mighty in their day,
Sunk from the battle-field away,
Leaving unmoved the British throne,
While others seem'd for ever gone.

XXXV.

Then Popery became a question,
That seem'd not easy of digestion;
For there were in her tempting forms
Delusive and beguiling charms,
That seem'd, with magical effect,
Fit to deceive, even the elect.
"The old religion" was her name,
That from the hoary fathers came.
"The only church" was her pretence,
Nor was salvation but from hence.
The ground of this exclusive claim,
'Twas somewhat difficult to name,
And hence the book that ought to show it,
Was kept away, that none might know it.
Thus stood the case throughout the land,
As still the case appears to stand;

Yet darkly gay, or proudly mean,
That hostile hierarchy is seen
To power aspiring, but in vain,
For British freedom spurns her chain.

XXXVI.

And there had been, in times gone by,
A project of the State, to try
If this itinerary, and ranging
From place to place, for ever changing,
Could not be stopp'd, and travelling teachers
Be made a kind of fixture-preachers.
The Bill that was to bless the land,
Would make all people understand
By fair preamble, that 'twas meant
To give all parties great content,
By teaching those who love to roam
To save expense, and stay at home.
The people most concern'd, suspected
Some evil, which they soon detected;
And with a voice that would be heard,
Their loud petitions were preferr'd
Against a measure fraught with ill,
And thus at length the public will
Prevail'd. Whatever was intended,
The project soon began and ended;
The threat'ning storm was heard no more,
And Preachers travell'd as before.

XXXVII.

Church government then came to be
A question of discussion free;
Which freely was discuss'd, and some
To sage conclusions seem'd to come.
The people were in government,
To say the least, omnipotent.
They were not to be ruled, but rule
The Pastor as a passive tool.
For this they clamour'd loud and long,
With frenzied thought, and bitter tongue,

With all their passions in a storm,
This order they pronounced reform;
But then a sudden calm ensued,
And the same noisy multitude
At length confess'd, and felt it too,
That this indeed would never do;
Who raised it first, were first to strike it,
For why? because they did not like it.

XXXVIII.

There had been wars of clam'rous tongues,
That would not be composed by songs,
However sweet; and passions raged,
That were not easily assuaged.
There pass'd a storm of words abroad,
That seem'd to shake the house of God,
And threaten, with aggressive roll,
To injure or subvert the whole.
The scene was strange; the stripling boy
Would his unripen'd wit employ,
And try his skill in grave debate
About the claims of Church and State!
Nor may the prudent act as though
Defeat had scatter'd every foe,
The skill that made the conflict cease
Must still preserve the church in peace.
There yet is need, in times like these,
To rise from apathy and ease,
And while we build, yet arm'd restrain
Who would demolish all again.

XXXIX.

Then last and late, throughout the nation,
All talk'd aloud of education.
And some of every rank and class
Were well content to have it pass
Into a law, (and so it ought,)
That Britons should be better taught.
But how this may be wisely done,
Is the chief thing to think upon.

The State which is both rich and wise,
Must furnish wisdom and supplies,
And thus accomplish, if it can,
Some all-sect comprehending plan;
And by some method, all its own,
Mix truth and error up in one.
But this is radically evil,
Nor is it to the nation civil,
To mix abhorrent things, and place
The youthful mind in such a case.
Perchance the wisdom of the wise
May yet some better thing devise,
And sager counsels yield the nation
A sound religious education.

XL.

Mourning and death had found a place
In Britain's kingly palaces;
And clothed the throne with solemn gloom,
That hid her princes in the tomb.
The patriarchal king, so long
The boast of every heart and tongue,
Whose lengthen'd reign extended o'er
A course of ages; he no more
With cares contended; but confest,
Of British kings, perchance, the best,
Midst tears and blessings sunk to rest.
And then his gay and graceful son
Sat splendid on a transient throne;
By kings and heroes view'd, which gave
But dazzling entrance to the grave.
And then the Sailor-Sovereign came,
A patriot Prince of noble name;
The father's virtues in the son,
Though brief, with pleasing lustre shone.
Then came the maiden Queen, whose reign
May Heaven and loyal hearts sustain.
Thus, in the course of years gone by,
Stern death has dealt with majesty.

The old and young, and grave and gay,
Have pass'd, as all must pass away;
This lesson leaving, written high,
"The living know that they must die."

XLI.

Nor had the rush of rolling years,
The rise and fall of hopes and fears,
That come and go, in restless course,
Diminish'd aught of all the force
That pure religion had before,
And still must have for evermore.
There was upon the face of truth
A blooming freshness as of youth;
Nor did that bloom at all betray
A sign or symptom of decay.
They err who say that former days
Were brighter, or more bless'd than these.
Look through the records of mankind
Since Adam fell, and you will find
No age or epoch written there,
That may with present times compare.
The world is better than of yore,
And wiser than it was before;
And, what is best of all, Heaven's will
Decides to make it better still.

XLII.

Philosophy had held dominion
O'er all the walks of free opinion;
And free opinion seem'd preferr'd
Above the doctrines of the word.
Bacon, with happy skill, had taught
The true philosophy of thought.
And Newton, as with eagle eye,
Had scann'd the wonders of the sky.
And Locke had shown, with force commanding,
The range of human understanding.
And Swift, and Addison, meanwhile,
Gave taste to literary style.

And SHAKSPEARE, still to nature true,
Brought public manners forth to view.
And MILTON gave to sacred lore
Poetic charms unknown before.
Yet simple truth and vital grace,
In court or cot, seem'd out of place;
And o'er the scenes of sacred things,
And learned halls, and seats of kings,
There was a damp and death-like shade;
The form was there, the power decay'd;
And hence the dulness of the land
Did this reviving grace demand.

XLIII.

Though wide and far the Gospel's call
Proclaims abounding grace to all;
Yet are there who regardless stray,
And strangely linger to obey.
All are not gather'd; many still
Resist the Saviour's kindly will:
Against his righteous laws rebel,
And urge their heedless course to hell.
All are not gather'd; some remain,
As bound with a relentless chain;
The captives of a power that binds,
Nor willingly his slaves resigns.
They judge unjustly, and do err,
Who from the past success infer
That further toils may be suspended,
As though the war was nearly ended.
There still is need of pious care,
And faithful zeal, and fervent prayer.
There still is need, at home, abroad,
Need of a further work of God,
Till Satan from his seat be hurl'd,
And Christ be known through all the world.
Toil on, ye Ministers of grace,
Nor rest till all our fallen race

By the same means, so greatly blest,
Still find in Him eternal rest.

XLIV.

The Lord in power o'er all presides,
High on the subject heavens he rides;
And reigning o'er events supreme,
Makes all their movements honour him.
The movement made to finish up
A century of toil and hope
Has in it every thing to prove
That it had first been made above.
No previous thought had gone so far,
Nor man in this with Heaven may share;
Who gave the means, the will bestow'd,
And both are equally of God.
Be this to after-ages known,
The praise is due to him alone;
Though rich the stream so freely given,
The fountain is above in heaven.
Such feelings and convictions rise
Attendant on the rich supplies
That in so many channels flow
Through Zion's smiling vales below.

XLV.

Say, what from hence may Zion hope,
And what shall bear her children up,
Or lead them forth, with joy abroad,
And larger means, to serve their God?
First in the train, 'mid sunny skies,
Some glad memorial shall arise,
A dome, whose shelter may supply
Grace to her rising ministry.
And then the missions, spreading wide,
Shall be with equal means supplied,
To carry on, and carry out,
Their plans of mercy round about.
Nor shall our temples fail to share
A portion of the public care.

Nor shall the man of many years
Sink unsustain'd beneath his cares,
But in life's gathering evening have
To soothe his passage to the grave.
Such good may Zion's children hope
To bear them in their labours up;
And send them forth with joy abroad,
And larger means, to serve their God.

XLVI.

The past is known, the deeds of ages
Are written fair on lasting pages;
But who may with pervading eye
Disclose thy scenes, futurity!
Poor man has little means to know
What shall be after him below.
A space contracted to a span
Is all allow'd the life of man;
And round that little span revolves
His hopes, and fears, and high resolves;
Which here beginning, here must close,
And sink where they at first arose.
What mind of man may go before,
And things ere yet they come explore?
Hope humbly, man of erring pride,
And in that hope be truth thy guide,
Beyond whose records all that lie
Is too remote for prophecy.

XLVII.

The Scriptures! they alone display
The glories of the latter day;
And led by their unerring light
The docile shall be led aright.
What imagery of all bright things,
The Bible to the subject brings;
The wastes of earth shall fruitful grow,
And rivers through the deserts flow;
Instead of thorns shall myrtles rise,
And nature yield her rich supplies;

Nor nation shall with nation war,
Nor tempests ravage earth afar.
The calf and bear, no longer foes,
Shall lie together in repose.
In flowery bands a child shall lead
The gentle panther through the mead.
The lion and the lamb shall be
Leagued in unbroken amity.
And rage and violence shall cease,
And all the earth be fill'd with peace.

XLVIII.

When learning's laurels shall decay,
And knowledge vanisheth away;
When tongues and prophecies shall fail,
And faith and hope no more avail;
Then, greatest of the happy three,
Abideth heaven-born charity.
This shall pervade the scenes of earth
With charms of universal worth.
The truth with graphic care portrays
The bliss of these approaching days,
When all shall hear the Gospel word,
And hearing, all shall know the Lord:
For many shall run to and fro,
And truth and peace shall spread and grow:
Then earth shall be a bright abode,
And all her happy realms abroad
Keep a long jubilee to God.

XLIX.

All is of God; and this confest,
The heart may here contented rest.
And if of him, inquire no more
O earth, but at his feet adore.
Harps strung in heaven, celestial lyres,
Angelic tongues, seraphic fires,
And all harmonious powers on high,
Shout loud salvation through the sky!

Sing the Redeemer's sovereign name,
And all his wond'rous works proclaim.
Shout him, ye hills, exalt him high,
And bid the echoing vales reply;
Commit the burden to the breeze,
And let it roll o'er all the seas.
Let flocks that graze the flow'ry mead,
And on the verdant herbage feed,
And tuneful birds of every note—
Far let the bursting chorus float;
From nature's altars let it rise
In loud, or gentle symphonies.
But chiefly, ye redeemed, rejoice,
Join every heart, and every voice;
Shout, all creation! heaven and earth,
Shout the Redeemer's praises forth!
For now salvation is, and now
The Lord appears to reign below;
And ever, as the seasons roll,
From age to age, and pole to pole.
Be this still sung, in ceaseless strains,
"The Lord o'er all for ever reigns;
The Alpha and Omega he,
Who was, and is, and still shall be,
The same through all eternity."

NOTES.

An hundred years have rolled away, &c.—Book i., p. 10.

"In the latter end of the year 1739, eight or ten persons came to me in London, who appeared to be convinced of sin, and earnestly groaning for redemption. They desired (as did two or three more the next day) that I would spend some time with them in prayer, and advise them how to flee from the wrath to come, which they saw continually hanging over their heads. That we might have more time for this work, I appointed a day when they might all come together, which from thenceforward they did every week, viz., on Thursday in the evening. To these, and as many more as desired to join with them, (for their number increased daily,) I gave those advices from time to time which I judged most needful for them; and we always concluded our meetings with prayer, suitable to their several necessities. This was the rise of the United Society, first in London, and then in other places."—*Rules of Society.*

They were a meek and lowly race, &c.—Book i., p. 10.

"Such a Society is no other than a company of men having the form, and seeking the power, of godliness; united in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation, and to watch over one another in love, that they may help each other to work out their salvation. . . . . By running with patience the race that is set before them, denying themselves, and taking up their cross daily, submitting to bear the reproach of Christ; to be as the filth and offscouring of the world; and looking that men should say all manner of evil of them falsely for the Lord's sake."—*Rules of Society.*

The love of order, deep and strong, &c.—Book i., p. 17.

"It was still my desire to preach in the church, rather than in any other place. But many obstructions were now laid in the way. Some Clergymen objected to this new doctrine, 'salvation by faith,' but the far more common (and indeed more plausible) objection was, 'The people crowd so, that they block up the church, and leave no room for the best in the parish.' Being thus excluded from the churches, and not daring to be silent, it remained only to preach in the open air, which I did at first, not out of choice, but necessity. But I have since seen abundant reason to adore the wise providence of God herein, making a way for myriads of people who never troubled any church, nor were likely so to do, to hear that word which they soon found to be the power of God unto salvation."—*Short History, &c.*, p. 176.

Thy erring sons, Cornubia, saw, &c.—Book i., p. 23.

"On August 26th, 1743, (my brother and one or two of our Preachers having been there before,) I set out for Cornwall, but made no considerable stop till I came to St. Ives, on Tuesday, 30th. Some time since, Captain Turner, of Bristol, put in here, and was greatly surprised to find a little society, formed upon Dr. Woodward's plan, who constantly met together. They were much refreshed and strengthened by him, and he was by them. This was the occasion of our first intercourse with them. They were about a hundred and twenty, near a hundred of whom had found peace with God. And it pleased God the seed which was then sown, has produced an abundant harvest. Indeed I hardly know any part of the three kingdoms where there has been a more general change."—*Short History, &c.*, p. 184.

Yet he at whom their darts were hurl'd, &c.—Book i., p. 28.

"No fear of misrepresentation or of obloquy shall ever deter me from declaring my belief that Wesley and Whitefield were chosen instruments of Providence for giving a great impulse to religious feeling, when it was needed most."—*Southey's Coll.*, vol. i., p. 383.

And then they fell to foul abuse, &c.—Book i., p. 28.

"My brother and I, and two young men, who were willing to spend and be spent for God, continued to call sinners to repentance in London, Bristol, and Bath, and a few other places. But not without violent opposition, both from high and low, learned and unlearned. Not only all manner of evil was spoken of us, both in private and public, but the beasts of the people were stirred up almost in all places 'to knock those mad dogs on the head at once.' And when complaint was made of their savage, brutal violence, no Magistrate would do us justice." —*Short History, &c.*, p. 177.

So stood he on the mount, and saw, &c.—Book i., p. 33.

"From this time (1775) I have, by the grace of God, gone on in the same track, travelling between four and five thousand miles a year; and once in two years going through Great Britain and Ireland, which, by the blessing of God, I am as well able to do now as I was twenty or thirty years ago."—*Short History, &c.*, p. 280.

Thus calmly closed his great career, &c.—Book i., p. 35.

"On Tuesday, March 1st, a person coming in, he strove to speak, but could not. Finding they could not understand him, he paused a little, and then, with all the remaining strength he had, cried out, 'The best of all is, God is with us;' and then lifting up his dying arm in token of victory, and raising his feeble voice in holy triumph not to be expressed, he again repeated the heart-reviving words, 'The best of all is, God is with us.'

"On Wednesday morning, March 2d, the closing scene drew near. Mr. Bradford, his faithful friend, prayed with him; and the last sound he was heard to articulate was, 'Farewell!' A few minutes before two, while several of his friends were kneeling around his bed, without a lingering groan, this man of God, this beloved pastor of thousands, entered into the joy of his Lord."—*Moore's Life of Wesley*, p. 393.

And one there was of pious fame, &c.—Book ii., p. 65.

"Mr. Walsh was the first who preached from the *pulpit* in London. Before that time, the Preachers had addressed the congregation from the reading-desk. When Mr. Walsh came he walked up into the pulpit, taking no notice of the custom. The solemnity of his manner, and the mighty force of his preaching, awed the congregation in an uncommon degree. From that time the Preachers ascended the London pulpits, no man forbidding them."—*Moore's Life of Wesley*, vol. ii., p. 147.

From stately halls of learned lore, &c.—Book ii., p. 117.

"On Monday, May 1st, our little society began in London. But it may be observed, the *first* rise of Methodism (so called) was in November, 1729, when four of us met together in Oxford; the second was in Savannah, in April, 1736, when twenty or thirty persons met at my house; the last was in London, on this day, when forty or fifty of us agreed to meet together every Wednesday evening, in order to a free conversation, begun and ended with singing and prayer."—*Short History, &c.*, p. 175.

The man is gone, but well defined, &c.—Book iii., p. 88.

"Rev. John Wesley. He studied mankind beyond the walls of the college; and the Fellow of Lincoln became in a certain sense a man of the world. His penetration was wonderfully acute, and his dexterity in debate has been so long known that it is almost become proverbial. On a review of the character of this extraordinary man, it appears that, though he was endowed with eminent talents, he was more distinguished by their use than even by their possession. Though his taste was classic, and his manner elegant, he sacrificed that society in which he was particularly calculated to shine, gave up those preferments which his abilities must have obtained, and devoted a long life in practising and enforcing the plainest duties. Instead of being an ornament to literature, he was a blessing to his fellow-creatures; instead of the genius of the age, he was the servant of God."—*Literary Anecdotes.*

Learning he had without its pride, &c.—Book iii., p. 89.

"Fully to exhibit the character of this man of God would require an ample volume. His attainments as a scholar, had he possessed no other distinction, would alone have entitled him to high respect. He was a critic in the Greek language, and he both spake and wrote Latin with remarkable fluency and correctness to the end of his life. At the University he studied Hebrew and Arabic. In Georgia, he conducted public worship both in French and Italian; and he offered to render the same service in their own tongue to a regiment of Germans at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, during the rebellion of 1745. His skill in logic was proverbial, and must strike every one who reads either his practical or his controversial works. They present finer examples illustrative of the principles of this most useful art, than those of almost any other of our English authors. His correct and elegant literary taste, his readiness of apprehension, his ability to comprehend and simplify the most abstruse and complex subjects, are manifest in the whole of his voluminous writings. There are many passages in his works which, for depth and justness of conception, and strength and beauty of expression, would not suffer from a comparison with the most admired selections that the English language can furnish."—*Jackson's Centenary*, p. 211.

Thus lived he, happy to survey, &c.—Book i., p. 33.

In March, 1785, he thus speaks of the revival of religion in which he had acted so very prominent a part:—"I was now considering how strangely the grain of mustard-seed, planted about fifty years ago, had grown up. It has spread through all Great Britain and Ireland, the Isle of Wight, and the Isle of Man; then to America, from the Leeward-Islands, through the whole Continent, into Canada and Newfoundland. And the Societies in all these parts walk by the same rule, knowing that religion is holy tempers; and striving to worship God, not in form only, but in spirit and in truth."—*Wesley's Works*, vol. iv., p. 298.

Beyond the date of mortal days, &c.—Book i., p. 34.

On January 1st, 1790, a little more than a year before his demise, he remarks:—"I am now an old man, decayed from head to foot. My eyes are dim, my right hand shakes much, my mouth is hot and dry every morning, I have a lingering fever almost every day, my motion is weak and slow. However, blessed be God, I do not slack my labours, I can preach and write still."—*Works*, vol. iv., p. 478.

That was a crisis full of care, &c.—Book i., p. 37.

"The death of its Founder formed a crisis in Wesleyan Methodism. While he lived, he was a band of union both to Preachers and Societies; but whether their unity could be preserved when his personal influence was no longer felt, was a question of very difficult solution, concerning which there were great searchings of heart in many quarters. If the 'Deed of Declaration' could be acted upon, so that the governing power, which that instrument created, should be generally acknowledged, there could be no just ground of painful apprehension: but if these objects could not be gained, the breaking up of the Connexion was inevitable. The Preachers felt the awful responsibility of their situation, and pledged themselves to abide by the principles which regulated Mr. Wesley's conduct from the beginning. Some of them were men of more than ordinary experience, wisdom, and integrity. Among these, W. Thompson, and A. Mather, stood pre-eminent. They were men of sterling sense, sound discretion, firm purpose, deep piety, and were solemnly impressed with the justness of Mr. Wesley's plans, which they thoroughly understood. These men of God, supported by their brethren, were a means of preserving Methodism in unimpaired efficiency in those critical times, and have thus laid the successive generations of both Preachers and people under lasting obligations."—*Jackson's Centenary*, p. 224.

He could delight the tasteful ear, &c.—Book iii., p. 89.

Dr. Johnson, than whom it would be difficult to name a better judge, and who was well acquainted with both Mr.

Wesley's public and private character, is said to have remarked of him, "He talks well on every subject."

And he had faith in things unseen, &c.—Book iii., p. 90.

"On the general question of supernatural appearances, it may be remarked, that Mr. Wesley might at least plead authorities for his faith, as high, as numerous, and as learned as any of our modern sceptics for their doubts. It is in modern times only that this species of infidelity has appeared, with the exception of the sophists of the atheistical sects of Greece and Rome, and the Sadducees among the Jews. The unbelief in the present day among free-thinkers and half-thinkers on such subjects places itself, therefore, with only these exceptions, in opposition to the belief of the learned and unlearned of every age, and of every nation, in every quarter of the globe. It does more; it places itself in opposition to the Scriptures, from which all the criticism, bold, subtle, profane or absurd, which has been resorted to, can never expunge either apparitions, possessions, or witchcraft. Every age has its dangers. In former times the danger lay in believing too much; in our own, the propensity is to believe too little. It is assumed by Mr. Southey, that Mr. Wesley believed every account he published, but this is not correct. He frequently remarks that he gives no opinion, but leaves every one to form his own judgment. He met with these relations in reading, or had them from persons deemed worthy of credit, and he put them on record only as facts reported to have happened. Many of these accounts, however, Mr. Wesley did believe, because he thought they stood on clear testimony; and he published them for that very purpose for which he believed they were permitted to occur, to confirm the faith of men in an invisible state, and the immortality of the soul."—*Watson's Obs.*

He was a patriot, &c.—Book iii., p. 90.

Dr. Whitehead well observes:—"When we find a man constantly travelling through all parts of the nation, holding intercourse with immense multitudes of people by means of the pulpit and private correspondence, and exerting all his influence on every occasion of public distress or alarm, to soften and

quiet the minds of the people, we must call him a national blessing. And such was the constant practice of Mr. Wesley for more than half a century."

And if to controversy driven, &c.—Book iii., p. 90.

His controversial pieces he wrote as need required. First, to preserve those who were in danger of being seduced from the plain religion of the Bible; and, secondly, if possible, to recover those who had fallen into the snare. The chief of these is his "Treatise on Original Sin," in answer to Dr. Taylor, of Norwich. In reference to this exercise, he remarks, "I now tread on an untried path with fear and trembling; fear, not of my adversary, but of myself. I fear my own spirit, lest I fall where many mightier have been slain. I never knew one (or but one) man write controversy with what I thought a right spirit. Every disputant seems to think (as every soldier) that he may hurt his opponent as much as he can; nay, that he ought to do his worst to him, or he cannot make the best of his own cause. But ought these things to be so? ought we not to love our neighbours as ourselves? And does a man cease to be our neighbour because he is of a different opinion? Ought we not for all this to do to him as we would he should do to us?"

All is of God; and this confest,
The heart may here contented rest, &c.—Book iv., p. 144.

Wesleyan Methodism possesses a distinctive character. If on this subject we take high ground, impute it not to a fondness for a sectarian name that we do so. It is not our fault that this name has an objectionable sound in the ears of some, or that it has been assumed by others who have done little honour to the designation. Methodism, in the sense in which we understand it, and in which we shall use it, is identified with Christianity itself, and we should hesitate to regard the name as proper for a Christian people to bear, if its import conveyed anything but the spirit and practice of pure Christianity. It proposes no objects but those which Christianity proposes. It adopts no means but those which the Gospel allows and enjoins. It propagates no principles but those which have the sanction and

authority of Christ and his Apostles; and hence, if the friends of Methodism have a right to regard their designation as identified with the genius of Christianity, there is nothing in the name but what may be innocently owned, although it was not originally chosen by themselves.

Yet Christianity, viewed under this distinctive name, comprehends the doctrines taught, and the discipline established, by Mr. Wesley. Not that he taught doctrines unknown to the Church before, or invented theories of religion not previously received. The work assigned him, and for which he was by the training of truth and grace so well prepared, was that of bringing out into more prominent display the doctrines that by the degeneracy of the times had been overlooked or obscured. The great principles of justification by faith, the witness of the Spirit, regeneration, and entire sanctification, were clearly in the Scriptures, and in the formularies of the Church; but they were not then understood by the people, nor were they proclaimed from the pulpit; nor were they general matters of inquiry or concern. Hence the merit of Mr. Wesley's ministry does not lie in the novelty of his opinions, but in the zeal and perseverance with which he called the public attention to the primitive principles of the Gospel, the bold manner in which he rebuked the errors and vices of the times, and the uncommon labours by which he succeeded to arouse a slumbering nation, and to spread scriptural holiness and vital religion through the length and breadth of the land.

Methodism is in fact a modern revival of ancient Christianity. More than this it does not claim, and less is below its pretensions. The religion of the Bible is love to God and man; and the first Christians were eminent for this. They breathed a spirit of purest charity, and indulged the ardours of a warm devotion. Their affectionate solicitudes embraced the wants of mankind, and bound them together in the fondest amities of social love. Their manners were as gentle and simple as their hearts were generous and sincere. They were not captivated by the charms of external splendour, nor lulled into the spiritless observance of forms. Their religion was full of energy, of purity, and of benevolence, and great grace was upon them all. To restore this state of things was obviously desirable, and to this the

Founder of Methodism devoted the labours of his lengthened life. For this he sought the abodes of the long-neglected, and, in the result, had the happiness to see a glorious revival of the religion of primitive times spreading through the nation.

Methodism involves an organized system of useful agency. It is the pleasure of God to accomplish his purposes by appointed and appropriate instruments, and as all the agencies of heaven and earth are at his disposal, so will he ever employ those which his sovereign wisdom suggests. And in the selection he often confounds the pride of human preferences, by giving efficiency to those which in themselves have no might, that no flesh may glory in his presence. The cause of which we are speaking employs many agents, and each of those has a special department of service, regulated by a system that gives every one its place. This system provides for the ministry at home, and the Missionary labours abroad; it comprehends the interests of the young, the sick, and the poor, and has a useful bearing on both the morals and religion of mankind; and the events of a century have brought out in unequivocal manifestation the moral utility of this organized agency, and the public benefits it is adapted to bestow.

Methodism is of a frank and catholic character. It seeks not mystery to veil its counsels, nor secrecy to conceal its movements. In the spirit of generous confidence, its entire economy is submitted in a sense to public inspection, because it is supported by public opinion; and in fact has nothing in its genius which it is interested to conceal. Nor is its candour less kindly than its counsels are frank. Good will to man, of every country and clime, truth and peace to Christians of every class, pity and forgiveness to bitterest foes, these are among the sentiments that genuine Methodism breathes; nor should a solitary case of contraction and bigotry, should it occur, rob an entire people of their cherished reputation for a catholic spirit, and an enlightened charity for all mankind.

Methodism possesses an *aggressive* character, when viewed in relation to the errors and vices of the world with which it can never form an alliance, and against which it is a declaration of war, bold and unbending as the spirit of the Gospel. It is *submissive*, if regarded in reference to established authorities, or

inflicted injuries, or personal privations, which true piety can neither resent nor revenge. It is *defensive*, if viewed in relation to the truth of God, the liberties of the pious, or the honours of the Saviour; in vindication of which, its energies of talent and piety have been employed. It is *remedial*, if regarded in relation to the ills that afflict mankind, and offers its agencies to heal the moral diseases of the world. And in attributing these qualities to Methodism, we do it on the ground of its identity with Christianity; nor could it on any other ground possess these characters. Nor would it on any other ground be worthy of regard, or capable of such useful services. These are distinctive qualities of the Gospel, and only that which claims affinity to the Gospel can claim to accomplish objects so valuable, and secure interests so dear.

Methodism is loyal, orderly, and patriotic. A respectful and affectionate regard to the powers that be, and a firm attachment to the person and authorities of the Prince, are the dictates of religion, and cannot be separated from it. The interests of society require the maintenance of order, and make it necessary that every man, according to his rank, office, and character, should be respected, and that the distinctions of society, created by Providence, should be everywhere observed. The true Christian in all countries should be regarded as the true patriot. His love of his country is not the dictate of policy, but of principle; and his manner of attesting this principle is at once honourable to himself, and essentially beneficial to the best interest of the country that commands his love.

Methodism occupies a distinctive position. Let it not be imputed either to perversity or choice that Methodism is placed in a peculiar position. Though respectful and affectionate to all, there is yet a sense in which it cannot lose its own identity, or compromise its integrity, by mixing with others, however valued or revered. Its relation to the Establishment of the country is neither servile nor unfriendly; and its attitude, with respect to other denominations, is candid and brotherly; but because it has sometimes found instances of unfriendliness in both, its safety lies in committing itself to neither, but in retaining its unfettered freedom to act for the public good, according to the liberty by which Christ hath made us free. Such a position is

somewhat too lofty to escape envy; and it is not surprising if the parties filling it should become objects of jealous regard, and that they should be alternately taunted and applauded, as passion or opinion may suggest. They, however, stand where Providence hath placed them, and it is not likely that either frowns or smiles will dislodge them from a position on which they are both out of the way of others, and at liberty to minister to the good of all.

Methodism has acquired progressive magnitude, and has passed from a state of comparative frailty, to a state of extended influence and moral power. When its Founder began his interesting career, his friends were few, and his means of usefulness limited. His exclusion from the church seemed further to cloud his prospects; and apathy in the one case, and opposition in the other, gave but imperfect promise of success. Yet out of this weakness came progressive strength. The public attention became awakened, souls became converted, assistances were supplied, and "the little one became a thousand;" and as the little cloud that arose out of the sea subsequently spread itself over the whole heavens, so this cause in its first appearance was small and feeble, but subsequently its amplified agency became vigorous, and the attending blessing of Heaven brought forth at last in gladdening manifestation the things which we now hear and see.

Methodism as a cherished means of moral good has survived the severity of a thousand tests, intended to decide its claims to countenance and support; storms of persecution have ascertained the firmness of the rock on which it rests. Petty annoyances have elicited the patience and meekness of its spirit. Temptations to ease and indulgence have given occasion for the display of activity, perseverance, and self-denial. Seasons of political strife and civil commotion have brought out its love of peace and order, and shown its steadfastness and loyalty. Times of public calamity and affliction have shown its humanity and benevolence, and having exhibited its principles in the practices of a hundred years, has thus established its claims to be regarded as an interesting department of God's general cause, on which to this day the stamp of heavenly sanction may be clearly seen.

We do not err therefore in congratulating you, as identified with this cause, and the circumstances and occasion of this Centenary festival. It was meet that we should gratefully acknowledge the hand that hath made us a people who were not a people; and though splendid eulogiums and self-gratulations may well be spared, yet with modesty and meekness we may innocently recount the great things the Lord hath done for us, and justly rejoice in the strength of our salvation.

We will detain you but to observe the acknowledged *influence* of Methodism on the earnestness of others, and on the interests of religious education.

Observe its influence on the earnestness of others. There was a time when a lamentable apathy pervaded the minds of all classes of men, and when religion was a matter of secondary and subordinate concern. Listlessness and indifference everywhere prevailed; or but few appeared fully alive to the wants of the people, or the importance of spiritual religion. But that there has been a great change in this respect is most evident; and that all classes of religious people have been stirred up to greater earnestness in promoting the interests of religion, is as obvious as it is satisfactory. What cause has produced this improvement, or what various causes combined may have produced it, is a matter about which opinions will vary; but truth and candour must allow that Methodism has at least had its share in provoking the activities of others, and in showing an example of zeal and liberality, by which others, in self-defence, have been compelled to earnestness in measures for promoting the spread of religion both at home and abroad.

Observe this especially as it effects the system of gratuitous education. At the beginning of Mr. Wesley's course, there was little or no provision made for the education of the poor. Sabbath schools were then unknown; and there were no national schools, nor were there any parochial or other institutions equal to the wants of the rising generation. It would scarcely be right to say, that a more competent system would not have been provided by this time; but it is only just to say, that the modern revival of religion in which Mr. Wesley took so leading a part, has called forth the energies of the

nation in this respect, and provided for a system of education which is now almost universally adopted, and which has been so far favoured with success, as to have improved the morals and knowledge of youth, to an extent beyond all previous example, and which promises abundance of good in after-times. —*Centenary Address.*

ROCHE, PRINTER, 70, OLD-STREET ROAD, LONDON.

This book is DUE on the last
date stamped below

10m-11,'50(2555)470

THE LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES

BX Martin -
8232 The centenary
W56c

BX
8232
W56c